LIFE OF

The Venerable Madeleine Barat.

ROEHAMPTON:

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THE LIFE

OF THE

VENERABLE MADELEINE BARAT,

FOUNDRESS OF THE

Society of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

DRAWN AND ABRIDGED FROM THE FRENCH

BY LADY GEORGIANA FULLERTON.

ROEHAMPTON.

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PREFACE

SINCE the Life of Mother Barat, translated from the French of the Abbé Baunard, was published in English some years ago, an event deeply interesting to all those who cherish the memory of this great servant of God, has changed the feelings of admiration and reverence, with which she was looked upon during her life and after her death in every part of the world where her spiritual children carry on the great work she instituted, into one of a more solemn and devotional nature.

On the 18th of July, 1879, His Holiness Pope Leo XIII. signed the decree for the introduction of the cause of the Beatification of the Foundress of the Sacred Heart, and allowed her to be called *Venerable*, thus authorizing the spontaneous homage paid her by many of the faithful and encouraging the hope that her sanctity will be one day attested by the infallible voice of the Church, and the name of Sophie Barat, the daughter of the vine dresser of Joigny, numbered amongst those of the saints who in every age have done great things for the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

The object of this volume is to present to Catholics a cheaper and more popular history of the servant of God

than the one previously published, and by bringing it thus within the reach of a greater number of readers to spread more widely the knowledge of her virtues and the lessons her life affords.

When the Church permits us to call one of her departed children *Venerable*, and the person so honoured is one whom we have ourselves seen and known, or heard of from our friends, or who has at any rate lived in our own days and amidst scenes more or less familiar to our mind, it seems to bring before us even to a greater degree, than in the case of holy persons in past ages, the fact that sanctity is attainable and should be aimed at not by a few only but by all baptized Christians. The details of such a life have greater influence, generally speaking, than those of the Saints of the Deserts or the Martyrs of old. The words, "Go thou and do likewise," seem less impossible to obey—the first step easier to take, in a road the features of which are not strange, and where all depends on the spirit and strength of will with which it is entered upon and pursued. Little did the Venerable Mother Barat dream where God was leading her. Every successive stage in that long pilgrimage of more than eighty years took her humility by surprise, and when it was completed she looked back and felt *she* had done nothing. It was her profound humility which led to her great achievements, and if God gives us grace to build in the least measure on the same foundation, we may hope to accomplish something towards the same end.

Aryfield,
March 1, 1880.

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CHAPTER I.

Sophie's childhood and the early formation of her character.

It was towards the close of the year 1779, in the little town of Joigny, in Burgundy, that Sophie Madeleine Barat, was born two months sooner than was expected, her mother having been prematurely confined, in consequence of the fright she underwent at a conflagration in the vicinity of her house. So small and so frail did the infant appear that she was at once taken to church to be baptized. Her brother Louis, then eleven years of age, stood as her godfather. Little did the schoolboy, at home for the holidays, for he was then a pupil at the College of Joigny, foresee that he was to be hereafter the teacher and for a while the spiritual guide of this young sister. It would indeed have seemed equally, if not still more, incredible, to the vine-dresser, Jacques Barat, if, when he carried his child in his arms into the church of his small native town, it had been foretold to him that the weak tiny creature in his arms, which he hardly expected to rear, was to live to the age of eighty-five, to accomplish one of the greatest works a woman ever did in her lifetime, to behold with her own eyes its wonderful extension and fifteen years only after her death to receive the title of Venerable. Yet so it was to be. How it happened we will endeavour to relate. We shall have to watch the slow unremitting and sure work of Providence from the beginning to the end of that long career.

Little Sophie gained strength by degrees under her mother's fostering care. She was never robust at any period of her existence, but became healthy and even exhibited a wonderful amount of exuberant life and a more than ordinary degree of childish ardour and vivacity, which tallied with the origin to which she ascribed her birth. She had been told of the conflagration which had marked that night. It used to amuse people to ask her, "What had brought her into the world;" and to hear her always answer very gravely, "The fire!" Her intelligence was singularly precocious. She appears to have been conscious of her existence when only seventeen months old. Excelling, as she did, in all infantine sports, Sophie very early took the lead of all her companions, to whom she used to relate prophetic dreams in which she herself played the part of a great queen. But what was most remarkable in this eager child was her good sense, and the just and rapid estimate she formed of whatever subjects came before her. A legal friend of her parents liked to put questions to Sophie, and was always astonished at her answers. One day that she accompanied her mother to the house of a solicitor where she had important business to transact, the way in which this little girl of ten years, rectified and completed Madame Barat's explanations perfectly amazed him. She had from infancy an inveterate horror of falsehood, and would have suffered anything rather than utter an untruth. Where so many excellent and brilliant qualities existed, there was some danger of self-complacency, and her cleverness led her to observe and comment on the defects of others with a certain amount of severity. But goodness of heart was so strong a characteristic of her nature that it redeemed and corrected those slight failings. Her brother, who was studying for the priesthood, was uneasy at the vehement attachments she conceived, even as a little child. He feared the sorrows,

anxieties, and even dangers and entanglements, which that impetuous sensibility might entail on her later in life if God did not at once take full possession of so pure and ardent a heart.

Her mother, on the contrary, rather encouraged than repressed the manifestations of her excessive tenderness. She found in Sophie's affection a consolation for secret sorrows of so delicate a nature that she could not confide them to anyone. Married to a man, good, religious, and upright, but greatly her inferior in birth, education, and cleverness, Madame Barat suffered intensely from this disparity. In her unbounded love for her children, she sought relief for this aching void. Sophie used to caress her with passionate fondness in hopes of assuaging a grief she could as yet hardly understand. These tender scenes once over, the child resumed all the gaiety which belonged to her youth and her disposition; but the knowledge, thus early acquired, of the secret trials of domestic life, imparted to her character an earnestness and a thoughtfulness beyond her years.

There was one inmate of Sophie's home who furnished a living example of a true Christian. This was her maternal grandfather, who had long edified his family and his native place by virtues worthy of the primitive days of the Church. From this venerable relative, and still more from her pious mother, Sophie received her first instructions in Christian doctrine.

As soon as her age allowed of it she attended the catechism classes of the parish. A trifling circumstance which occurred at that time enabled her spiritual guide to form some idea of the sincerity and generosity of soul of which she gave so many subsequent proofs. One day, shortly before Easter, the curé of St. Thibault, having collected together the children of his parish, was exhorting them to make an act of contrition and to ask God to

forgive them their sins, adding that if their sorrow for these sins was perfect they would all be forgiven. Immediately a little girl stood up, and of her own accord began to make in a loud voice a confession of her faults. This child was Sophie Barat. Everyone laughed, and the priest stopped her; but in this spontaneous act of humility, and the simple piety which prompted it, he discerned the graces likely to descend on his young penitent.

Simple-hearted as she was, it was nevertheless this little girl who gave the best answers in the catechism class; but she was so short, and her voice so weak, that in order to be seen and heard she had to stand on a bench. When, at ten years of age, she was presented for admission to make her first Communion, the vicaire at once concluded that she was too young, and postponed her admission; but the curé judged more correctly. He examined little Sophie, and was so struck by her knowledge and her innocence that the decision was reconsidered, and she was permitted to receive the Bread of Angels. This was in the memorable year 1789.

Her first Communion infused into the soul of Sophie wonderful grace and light; she was struck at that time with those words of our Lord which have so often suggested the first thought of a religious vocation: "If any man loves father or mother more than Me, he is not worthy of Me;" and those others: "Whosoever has left house, or brother, or sister, father or mother, for My sake, shall receive a hundred-fold and possess eternal life."

Endowed as she was with so many natural and spiritual graces, Sophie required a director; she found one in her own family.

Young Louis Barat, after hard study in the College of Joigny, which he left at the age of seventeen, having borne away all the prizes of his class, felt himself called to the priesthood. The times were becoming more and

more perilous. It was evident that the Church, already held up to scorn by the revolutionary party, would soon be the object of its violent attacks, and that persecution, or even martyrdom, would be the fate of its ministers. Louis Barat was not daunted by these threatening prospects. His faith was firm, and he was endowed with no ordinary amount of strength of character. He courageously entered the great Seminary of Sens, where, at the age of twenty-two, he was ordained subdeacon, having previously completed his ecclesiastical studies. He was then sent to the College of Joigny as professor of mathematics, and awaited there the age for ordination. It was then that he discovered with astonishment the rare qualities of his young sister, and felt that a great duty devolved on him, that of training her soul for God. He therefore undertook her education, and devoted himself to it with the generous, though rather austere, zeal which belonged to his character.

Up to that time Sophie had shared all her mother's occupations, sometimes accompanying her to the vineyard, sometimes employed in the work of the house, and acquiring under her guidance those habits of order, industry, and economy which endeared to her in after days the holy mysteries of the home of Nazareth. But now a change took place in her daily avocations; her brother made her devote herself to study, and he gave her a rule of life. Each day, early in the morning, at the hour when her father entered his workshop or proceeded to the fields, Sophie rose, and after having devoutly heard the first Mass in the neighbouring church, she returned to her garret, and there occupied herself with studies, only interrupted by necessary intercourse with her family and very rare holidays.

Her favourite recreation was to walk in her father's vineyard, on the heights of Larry. From thence, the serpentine course of the Yonne, as it wound through the

fields, the amphitheatre of hills which in the distance divided the plateau of Mount Tholon from Mount St. Jacques; and in the further distance, the deep forest of Othe presented to her view a magnificent image of the greatness of God, shown forth in His works. Her holidays only lasted during the vintage, or during the Abbé Louis' short absences, and even these brief intervals of repose were sometimes abridged by the unexpected return of her teacher, who forthwith set his saddened scholar to work again. She speaks in after-life of these disappointments: "I had to leave my basket and return to my books, saying to myself, 'It is indeed true that there is no pleasure without bitterness.'"

However, the same somewhat exacting master who insisted on these sacrifices, used to soften their severity by the charm his piety imparted to them. There were, if one may so speak, two different men in the Abbé Barat. He was at the same time a mathematician and a poet; to a remarkable inflexibility of character he united a great elevation of heart and a grace of imagination, which enabled him, in conversing with his young sister on the love of God, to illustrate his teaching by the most pleasing comparisons. He found her one day with her pet lamb at her feet; this creature was so much attached to its little mistress that it would leave even its food to follow her, and seemed to find perfect happiness in resting by her side. "See what that lamb is doing!" the Abbé Barat said to Sophie, "it lies still and it loves." This sort of love, this quiet abandonment at the feet of the Good Shepherd, became, as we shall see, one of the peculiar characteristics of Madame Barat's piety. Under this stern yet sweet training, Sophie's mind developed itself so rapidly that she soon mastered the elements of scholastic knowledge. Then, her brother, persuaded that it would be for the glory of God, and guided, no doubt, by a providential inspiration,

determined to cultivate to the utmost the seeds that promised so rich a harvest, and to enlarge his plans for her education. Step by step, he was led to extend the sphere of his sister's studies, far beyond the usual amount of feminine knowledge. He taught her Latin, and soon she was able to read the classics in the original texts. This opened a world of delight to the eager young girl; Virgil's poems especially fascinated her. His elevated, deep, and religious mind, and his exquisite descriptions of the beauties of nature, filled her with admiration. "I was a Virgilian, more than a Christian, at that time," she said, in alluding to this youthful enthusiasm. She learned Greek also, and translated Homer. The study of these ancient authors was more than an intellectual enjoyment to the future Foundress of the Society of the Sacred Heart. Many of the sentiments and thoughts which she found in them seemed to answer to her own thoughts and feelings, and satisfied her innate cravings for ideal beauty and moral grandeur. In allusion to this, she writes in later years: "I like heroism; it gives, at any rate, breathing space to the soul and life to the heart." But the first and the highest benefit of these studies was to awaken in Sophie's soul lofty and boundless aspirations, which are God's own invitations to those whose yearnings He alone can satisfy. She was conscious of this herself; one day we shall find her saluting from the shores of the Adriatic that fair Grecian land, the home of beauty and art, but in the midst of her enthusiasm, thanking the Giver of a higher Revelation, and animating herself to train souls in the knowledge and the love of a holier beauty.

Nothing seemed to satisfy the engrossing activity of Sophie's mind. The natural sciences, botany, and elementary astronomy were taught her by her brother, who excelled in all these branches of knowledge. He allowed her, as a recreation and a reward, to learn modern languages. She studied Spanish and mastered Italian, which enabled

her in after-life to instruct and to edify her spiritual daughters, when she visited them in Italy.

Sophie's mother found it very difficult to understand the object of subjecting her child to so much mental labour; what was the use, she thought, of so much learning for the daughter of a vine-dresser? She never anticipated another destiny for this beloved child than to marry and settle at Joigny. Her father, on the contrary, was elated by her success, and predicted for her a brilliant future. What that future was to be neither of them could foresee, but God, to Whom it was visible, was secretly pre-ordaining means to His end.

It was necessary for the Foundress of a teaching Institute, in which knowledge was to be a special requirement, to be distinguished by an uncommon degree of mental culture. Seen in that light, science was an approximation to God. "If I had the intellect of an angel," a Saint once said, "I should love God as the angels love Him." Sophie's passion for books might have led to a taste for dangerous reading, but she was preserved from this snare by a delicacy founded on the fear of God. She read wonderfully well, throwing her whole soul into her intonations and accent. Madame Barat once requested her to read to some of her friends one of Marmontel's tales. She could not resist the wish to show off her daughter's talents, but Sophie, when she tried to comply with her mother's desire, showed so plainly that it distressed her, that one of the visitors interposed, and begged that she might be spared the trial. Once Sophie yielded to the temptation of reading a book, which was then greatly in vogue both in France and England, *Clarissa Harlowe*, but she felt remorse for it as long as she lived.

When circumstances required it, she knew how to repel familiarity in the most prompt and decisive manner. One day when she was visiting some friends of her family, a

young man ventured to approach Mdlle. Barat, and endeavoured to fasten a bouquet to her dress. She threw the flowers on the ground and trod upon them, expressing at the same time her displeasure by a few indignant words. Graceful and pretty she naturally was, her countenance full of life and animation, but she never took pains to increase her good looks by artificial means, and was remarkable for the extreme simplicity of her dress, a simplicity which her companions laughed at as exaggerated. She took, in consequence, a little more care of her personal appearance, and even consented to powder her hair, a piece of vanity she soon discontinued and looked back to with regret.

The idea of consecrating herself to God in religion arose in her mind at an early period. She could not point to the moment when she had first felt this desire, but she knew that it had existed from the time of her childhood. It was the spontaneous fruit of grace, and the consequence and reward of her love of Jesus and His holy Mother. It is remarkable that up to the day of her own consecration she had never been acquainted with any nuns. It seemed as if our Lord had chosen to accomplish in a direct manner His own purposes in this extraordinary vocation.

It was in the year 1792 that she made up her mind on the subject. Her sister, Marie Louise, had just been married to M. Dusaussoy, a merchant at Joigny. Sophie seized on this opportunity to declare that, for her part, she had made choice of the only Bridegroom who can be unboundedly loved, and even adored, without remorse. This resolution was an heroic act at the time when she made it, for at the very moment when she determined to enter a convent, the religious houses were on every side attacked, devastated, and despoiled. The Reign of Terror was fully established, the prisons full of nuns and priests, scaffolds were everywhere being erected, and the assaults

directed against the Church had, even then, attained and saddened the peaceful home of the Rue du Puits-Chardon. Louis Barat had already been ordained deacon when, in 1790, all the ministers of religion were called upon to swear fidelity to the Civil Constitution of the Clergy. The Constitution was an act of schism, which withdrew the Church of France from the authority of the Holy See, and placed it under the control of the sovereign people. The parents of the young deacon could not estimate the bearings of this act, and alarmed at the consequences which a refusal of the oath of allegiance would entail on their son, they entreated him with tears to obey the decree. Deceived by the example of his Archbishop, the too famous Loménie de Brienne, and of a certain number of his priests, Louis suffered himself to be persuaded to take the required oath. But no sooner had he done so, than he perceived into what an abyss he had fallen, and listening only to the remonstrances of his conscience, he openly retracted the step he had taken, by a letter addressed to the Municipal Council, which is still preserved in the archives of the town. After this courageous act, Louis Barat had continued to live for two years at Joigny, teaching in the College, and directing the education of his sister at his father's house; but at the end of that time, pursued by reiterated summons which offered no alternative but "the oath or death," he left that town and proceeded to Paris, bidding a possibly eternal farewell to his family and his dear pupil. In Paris he hoped more easily to conceal himself, and earn his subsistence by giving lessons. But his tranquillity was not of long duration.

In the month of May of that fatal year, 1793, Louis Barat, having been denounced by a former college companion, was consigned to one of those prisons from whence the victims emerged only to mount the scaffold. This sad intelligence soon reached his parents, and from that

moment life was for them but one long anguish. Madame Barat, in particular, gave way to despair, in a way which made her friends afraid that she would go out of her mind. She maintained a mournful silence, refused to take food, and perceptibly wasted away. In vain Sophie prepared and pressed upon her whatever she thought most likely to tempt her appetite. She rose from every meal in gloomy silence, after handing over to her daughter the dishes she would not touch. But one day Sophie said in a determined tone of voice: "Neither will I eat anything." "Are you ill, my child?" "No, mother; but I have resolved to eat nothing as long as you refuse food; we shall then, at any rate, die together." Madame Barat burst into tears, embraced her daughter, and consented to take some nourishment; by degrees she regained sufficient strength to await with resignation whatever it would please God to ordain for her son.

He, meanwhile, was being dragged from prison to prison. At first he was lodged in the Conciergerie, and then successively transferred to Sainte Pélagie, to Bicêtre, to Saint Lazare, and, finally, to the Luxembourg. These removals were occasions of severe suffering to the prisoners. Chained together in pairs, and drawn slowly along in carts, they were subjected to the rudest insults of the populace. Already eighty-five of the prisoners of Saint Lazare had been beheaded, and Louis Barat was in constant expectation of his death-warrant, when the 9th Thermidor ushered in the fall of Robespierre. He was not, however, released until the month of February, 1795, after an imprisonment of one year and eight months. He had at that time attained the age of twenty-seven.

On regaining his liberty, this confessor of the faith was secretly ordained by Mgr. de Barral, the former Bishop of Troyes, who had returned from exile. The new priest burned with desire to do great things for the glory of God.

Sometimes, in his deep regret at not having been found worthy of martyrdom, he felt inclined to seek it in the foreign missions; at other moments, he felt powerfully attracted towards the Society of Jesus, then suppressed throughout nearly the whole of Europe, and thought of joining the Jesuits in Russia, where they still possessed some establishments. But there was a work, apparently of less importance, but in reality of greater consequence, which Providence had assigned to him as his principal mission; this was the guidance and direction of his sister. She had now reached the age of sixteen; a graceful modesty was her special characteristic. One of her nephews, a venerable priest, who died at Lille at the age of nearly eighty, thus describes her: "Her image is indelibly impressed upon my mind as the very type of that modesty and good sense for which she was so remarkable." The school of adversity had matured this good sense, strengthened her in virtue, and confirmed her resolution of giving herself to God. But these very merits were liable to become a snare. Her mother, who heard on every side the most enthusiastic praises of this beloved child, made her the object of a worship capable of injuring the most admirable qualities. "Sought after, admired, her every wish anticipated," writes one of her first companions in religion, "she was more petted and cherished than the daughter of a prince." Sophie's vocation might have been endangered by the enervating atmosphere of praise in which she lived, if a firm hand had not then hastened to withdraw her from it.

The Abbé Barat proposed and urged that she should accompany him to Paris, where he intended to settle. He thought it would be easier to train her there than at home, to become an instrument fitted for the accomplishment of the Divine will. This proposal, as might have been expected, raised a great storm; Madame Barat began by declaring that nothing on earth should separate her from

her child; Sophie wept, protested, and implored her mother not to consent to her being torn away from her. To this opposition, the priest was, for the time, obliged to yield. He went to Paris alone, but, from thence, at once commenced a correspondence with his sister, the loss of which is to be deeply regretted.

To her brother's representations of what faith and wisdom required of her, Sophie always opposed the same objection, which appeared to her unanswerable, that of her love for her mother. "I undertook to prove to him," she relates, "that what he urged was contrary to the order of nature, and that the law of charity could never prescribe the separation of a child from her mother. I had taken in hand the defence of a bad cause, and have always reproached myself for it: of course my pleading did not succeed."

Accordingly, a second visit of the Abbé Barat to Joigny had the effect of determining his sister to this painful but necessary separation. Her father was the first to resign himself to her departure. He had remarked that his daughter was beginning to waste her time, and being certain that at Paris she would be perfectly safe with her brother, he thought they would take mutual care of each other, that she could complete her studies, and that when her merits were known, she would perhaps secure for herself a better position than that of her parents. In the end her mother was brought to acquiesce in these views and consented to Sophie's departure, but only on condition that each year, during the vintage, she should return and spend some time with her parents.

The young girl took a sad farewell of her family and left Joigny, accompanied by her brother and one of her friends, who was also going to Paris. They travelled by the diligence: it was then a journey of many days. Sophie endeavoured to beguile the length of the road and to

relieve the sadness of her first separation from her much loved home, by keeping up an animated conversation with her companion, but her brother reproved her for it. He said that a Christian maiden, when about to enter a town red with the blood of martyrs, and where religion was proscribed, ought to practise greater recollection. Sophie could foresee, from that moment, how severe was to be the training she was about to go through.

It was indeed a sorrowful time for the Church of France. But whilst destruction had done its work, God had sowed seeds among the ruins which were about to produce fresh blossoms. His mercy remembered the city of St. Denis and St. Geneviève, of so many confessors of the faith, and of so many devoted virgins. He was already summoning to this great centre of action recruits from among His saints for purposes not yet known to the world or to themselves. A venerable Christian, Madame Duval, received Louis Barat and his sister in her house, in the Rue de Touraine. In one of the rooms, transformed into an oratory, the Abbé Barat secretly celebrated Mass. The chief ornaments of this poor little chapel were two pictures, one of which had a great and almost prophetic signification; it represented St. Ignatius and his first companions consecrating themselves to Jesus Christ in the Church of Montmartre. The other was a picture of the Mother of God, holding her Son in her arms, which is now preserved with veneration in the mother-house at Paris.

Some Christian women of the neighbourhood attended Mass in this little sanctuary; the Abbé Barat gave them familiar instructions, and many of them placed themselves under his direction.

He soon discovered that they had all a vocation to the religious life; but at what time, in what place, or in what congregation it would be given them to follow it, was not yet apparent. The Abbé Barat left it to God to provide.

Persuaded as he was that, amid the destruction of faith, which was the prevailing evil of the day, work for souls must largely enter into all vocations, he prepared his spiritual children for an active apostleship by strengthening their minds with all kinds of knowledge. Under the protection of Madame Duval's hospitable roof, he made them go through a course of scientific and classical studies. Sophie was so superior in ability to her companions, that her brother used to check her progress in order to conceal her capabilities.

It was, however, no longer to human sciences that the young girl gave the preference. She read and translated the works of sacred and ecclesiastical authors, the most beautiful passages from the Fathers, the Doctors of the Church, and the Masters of spiritual life. The Word of God especially was her delight, and nothing gave so much pleasure to the Abbé Barat as to assist her in that study.

This solid form of education very much resembled that which St. Jerome imparted to the Roman ladies of his time.

Under this discipline and amidst these influences, Sophie acquired a taste and desire for the interior life, which laid the foundation of her future sanctity. The life she led with her brother at Paris was poor, austere, and hidden in God. Rest was short in the house of the Rue de Touraine, prayer frequent, and work continual. The Abbé Barat helped in the maintenance of the inmates by giving out-door lessons, his sister worked with her hands for him and the others.

We also learn that Sophie and her companions instructed some of the children in the neighbourhood, whom the evil times deprived of the opportunity of attending catechism.

Sophie had for her first director in Paris a friend of her brother's, the Abbé Philibert de Bruillard, one of those devoted priests who had given proofs of apostolic heroism during the Reign of Terror. He was afterwards Curé of

St. Etienne du Mont, then Bishop of Grenoble, and ended his life in one of the houses of that Order of the Sacred Heart, the origin of which was connected with his oldest recollections.

After the lapse of half a century, he was wont to speak of the admiration he had felt for Mother Barat at that time, but he did not long continue to direct her; by his advice, the Abbé Barat resumed the care of his sister's soul, and under his zealous and stern guidance she entered on and advanced in the rough ways of the Cross.

There were many points of resemblance between the brother and sister; they were alike in their spirit of faith, their ardent devotion and indefatigable energy, and yet it would be difficult to find two natures more strongly contrasted than theirs. She was remarkable for a timid delicacy and a simple humble submissiveness, whereas he had been matured, even in some degree hardened, in the school of adversity, and was inflexible in the pursuit of what he aimed at. Sophie's sanctification was no doubt his object, for there was only one way in which such a man as Louis Barat could testify his affection for his sister, and that was by making her a saint. As a sculptor, by dint of chiselling, perfects the image he frames out of the white marble, so he set about producing in that pure soul a likeness of Jesus Christ. His energy was equal to his zeal, and he consequently commenced by striking hard blows.

Convinced, in the first place, that attachment to its own will is the greatest obstacle to the Divine operation in a soul, he stopped at nothing by which he could subdue self-will in his sister. If she was taking great interest in reading a book, he made her give it up. If she was working something with which she intended to please or surprise him, he threw it into the fire.

Vanity, above all, was pursued into its last stronghold.

The young girl had nothing in which to appear but the little Burgundian costume which she had brought from Joigny. Once, when she had made herself a somewhat smarter dress, he burnt it at once. One of Sophie's earliest and most saintly friends tells us that she could scarcely restrain her tears on this occasion, but this severity tended to purify her heart and attach it to God.

"During this period," says the same witness, "she suffered much from her brother's rigorous treatment; she felt as if she was the only person to whom he showed harshness; towards others he was most indulgent. But nothing could shake her confidence in one who took so true an interest in her soul, and was himself a pattern of perfect mortification. He subjected his sister to these trials in order to train her to sanctity, and in imposing on her penances, hard and repugnant to self-love, he used every effort to make her love them."

And with that view he always told her to perform them in union with our Lord's sufferings. "The poor child used to shed many tears in secret," writes her friend, "but she united them to those of Jesus Christ, whom she already dearly loved." She learnt at last to smile at what once had made her suffer.

This increasing love of Christ produced in her humility, which was always one of Mother Barat's principal virtues. The height of her ambition at that time was to be received by the Carmelites as a lay-sister. Everything she heard and read confirmed her in this desire, by showing her how pleasing obscurity is to the Heart of Jesus Christ, and if sometimes she felt discouraged by the examples of eminent sanctity contained in the lives of the saints, she tells us how she consoled herself. "These huge sanctities frighten me, but no matter, there is at least one way by which I can approach these models, and that is humility, and that shall be the way in which I will show my God that I love Him."

This was indeed her director's object in his guidance of her conscience, but, impelled by a zeal as yet wanting in experience, he went further than was necessary, and ran into dangerous excesses. Eager for the purification of this submissive soul, her brother made her scrutinize minutely its innermost folds, and insisted on interminable general confessions which agitated and troubled her. Full of fears before Holy Communion, she was driven to seek pretexts for abstaining from receiving our Lord in the Sacrament of His love. It sometimes happened that even at the foot of the altar, when her director was saying Mass, he saw her tremble and hesitate. He would then make her a sign to approach, and she, out of obedience, received the Divine Spouse of virgins.

At that time also, consumed with love for Jesus Christ and indignant at bearing so little resemblance to Him, Sophie thought that the only way of punishing herself and pleasing him was to crucify her innocent flesh. She fasted, watched, slept on the bare ground, disciplined her delicate frame, and wore an iron girdle.

Her constitution, naturally delicate, was still further enfeebled by these austerities, which surpassed her strength. In sanctioning these her director made a mistake, which he understood when experience had improved his knowledge of the guidance of souls. In after years he asked pardon of God and of his sister for this involuntary error.

Sophie's sojourn in Paris did not make her forget her family in Burgundy. A correspondence, as frequent as the times permitted, constantly kept up in all its strength, an affection of which religion never requires the sacrifice or weakens the tenderness, but to this tenderness were now united that love for God and zeal for souls which purify and sanctify human attachments. The first of Sophie's letters which we possess evinces this feeling; it is addressed to her sister, Madame Dusaussoy, who was ill at that time.

Sophie pities her sufferings, encourages her in her duties, and promises to assist her in the education of her young family. She says: "I am much grieved, my dear sister, at the troubles which afflict you, for I know how weak you are and how keen are your feelings. I hope your illness will not increase; but try not to lose the benefit of these afflictions, and take advantage of your present state to draw nearer to God. If you have a little confidence in Him, He will assist you, and you will soon feel that by a few efforts everything can be achieved." She then promises in the fulness of her heart what she subsequently so abundantly performed. "My good sister, open your heart to me; ah! if you but knew how I feel your sorrows! How I should wish, if it were possible, to relieve you of half your heavy burthen. That time will come. You are not abandoned in your needs as a mother, for God, Who knows your helplessness, sends you friends who will assist you."

In some of her other letters we see the high ideas which this young girl of twenty had conceived of the sacred duties of a mother. "By delaying this assistance, God shows that He wishes you for a short time to bear your burthen alone; but in order not to frustrate His merciful intentions, do not neglect any means of inculcating religion in the young souls He has confided to you. Do not deceive yourself, they are not your own; they are a deposit for which you will have one day to render account."

According to agreement, Sophie returned each year to spend the vintage-time with her family. She was a perfect model of what a young girl ought to be in her home, and gained over her young companions and friends an influence which she owed even more to her prudence and goodness than to her talents and information. She spoke to them of God, took them with her to church, inspired them with her own devotion to the Queen of Virgins, and induced them to go often to Confession and Communion. But the chief

attraction and greatest object of her solicitude were the souls of children. Her eldest nephew, of whom we have already spoken, thus dwells on his recollections of his holy relative. "My aunt's modesty, her sweetness, her soft melodious voice quite fascinated me, even at the age of four or five. During the holidays, she often kindly took me by the hand, and walked with me on the heights which rise above the smiling valley of the Yonne. It was there that she used to instruct me, and to tell me of God and of His love; relating to me stories suitable to my age, singing to me sweet hymns, and reciting pieces of sacred poetry. I particularly remember one beautiful day in autumn, when, having seated ourselves under the shade of a green oak tree, within view of the windings of the river, my aunt recited for me the speech of the young Eliacin from the tragedy of 'Athalie.' Her countenance seemed to glow with the fire which burnt in her heart, and her accents seemed inspired. I listened to her, spell-bound by a sense of the beautiful which I was for the first time conscious of, and now in my extreme old age, I still retain the remembrance of those hours." The same nephew relates that his aunt sometimes said to him, "You are very happy to be a man; it is a privilege I envy you, for men can do great things for God."

What was it she desired to do? In what direction was the hand pointing which was invisibly leading her on? She did not know it then: she had made her first apprenticeship of life in that humble manner which prepares the soul for future apostleship. By the simplicity of her character and its genuine humility, she had remained faithful to her obscure origin, but her education and her superiority of mind raised her far above her station. She was now twenty, and during the four years she had spent in Paris she had acquired a solidity of virtue capable of bearing the weight of a great responsibility. She felt that she was called to the religious

life, but she did not see in France any religious institute that fully satisfied her aspirations. Two different attractions seemed to be struggling in her heart. Sometimes, when reading the life of St. Francis Xavier and the great missionaries, she was filled with a vehement ardour for the conquest of souls, and longed to become an apostle and an evangelist of the love of Jesus Christ, even to the furthest extremities of the earth; or, at least, of cooperating in the apostolic work about to recommence in her native land. At other times, the example of St. Theresa inflamed her soul with love for Jesus Christ crucified, and directed her thoughts towards those retreats where, close to His Sacred Heart, the spouses of Jesus consume themselves in lives of solitude, prayer, and sacrifice.

The active and contemplative life, great as is the difference between them, appeared equally holy and useful to the future foundress of the Sacred Heart, but she could not discern as yet which of these lives her Lord was calling her to embrace. She did not know that Providence intended her to combine both in a new Institute, the idea of which God had revealed to one of His servants. The hour was at hand when the scattered elements of this great work were about to coalesce under the mighty hand of God.

CHAPTER II.

Origin of the Society of the Sacred Heart.

1800.

About the month of July, in the year 1800, the Abbé Barat spoke of his sister to a holy priest with whom he was intimate: a light was given to this servant of God which decided her vocation.

Sophie was, at that time, spending her holidays with her family at Joigny. Her brother, who was only waiting for the moment of her entrance into some religious order, had recently taken an important step. Obeying the impulse which, for a long time past, had attracted him to the Society of Jesus, he joined some fervent priests, who, adopting the name of Fathers of the Faith, lived in community under the rule of St. Ignatius, and aimed at re-establishing his Order. It was Father Varin who admitted the Abbé Barat into that association. This great servant of God was ordained to be the instrument of Providence, not only with regard to the direction of Mother Barat's soul, but in all that related to the Society of the Sacred Heart, which looks upon him as its founder, and venerates him as its model.

Joseph Varin d'Ainvelle, born at Besançon, of a family of legal eminence, was then about thirty years of age. His life, which had been a singularly varied and restless one, was marked by special graces; and his brilliant qualities fitted him for great achievements; but for a long time he did not appear to be conscious of it. At the age of sixteen, he cared for nothing but horses, hunting, races, adventures, or

travels. However, at nineteen, he entered the Seminary of Saint Sulpice, at Paris, and there, under the guidance of M. Emery, he subjected to study, to piety, and to self-discipline, a soul which had, as yet, lost nothing of its fiery impetuosity. But sedentary occupations were unsuited to his nature, and soon affected his health so much that he was forced to give up his studies. He left Paris at the age of twenty-two, on the day rendered famous by the fall of the Bastille. Soon afterwards we find him serving as a dragoon in the army of Condé, and displaying chivalrous bravery during the campaigns of 1792 and 1793. In the midst of the perils of war, his health, which seemed absolutely to require activity and excitement, was completed restored, and his faith and purity did not suffer.

When he was twenty-five years of age, in despair at having missed a bloody engagement, which had taken place while he was staying on leave of absence with his family, he went to Belgium, and enrolled himself in the regiment of the hussars of Choiseul. When passing through Vanloo, he visited four of his seminary friends, who urged him to consecrate himself at once with them to the service of God. The gallant soldier at first only laughed and said: "Make anything you like of me except a monk." "Do not be afraid," replied the head of the little band, "you will still be a warrior. We shall fight for the Lord with hand and heart." Varin agreed to lay the matter before God in prayer. He went to Confession and Communion. God spoke to his heart. When he rose from his knees he was weeping, and and seizing the hand of the priest who had given him Holy Communion, he said: "If God were to send an angel to declare to me His will, I could not know it with more absolute certainty. I hesitate no longer, I belong to you."

This took place on the 18th of July, the evening of the very day on which his mother, the heroic Madame Varin, mounted the scaffold, "to ascend," as she said herself,

"from thence to heaven." Her son was then ignorant that his mother's last prayer had been that he might regain his lost vocation.

The Society of the Sacred Heart, was the title adopted by the band of young men who had resolved to revive the Society of Jesus.

On the very day on which Joseph Varin joined them, they started on their travels, and after a journey of five weeks arrived at Augsburg. It was there that, after courageously going through his two years probation, he was ordained priest.

Driven by the progress of the French invasion from Augsburg to Passau, from Passau to Vienna, from Vienna to Hagenbrunn, the little colony, poor and persecuted, increased every day in numbers and in fervour. It was then that God began to open a new work to their faith.

It was not enough for their priestly zeal to labour at reviving religion amongst men; women also, the mothers of families, Christian wives, virtuous young girls, were to bear a very considerable share, greater than ever, in the renovation of society. With this intention Father Léonor de Tournély, who had been elected Superior of the new Congregation, was inspired to found, in the same manner, and almost on the same plan as his society of men, a society of women, consecrated to the instruction of the children, not only of the poor, but of the upper and influential classes. To be devoted to the Heart of Jesus, to revive His love in the souls and the light of His doctrine in the minds of Christians, to borrow, as it were, the sentiments and interior inclinations of the Divine Heart, and to impart them to others by means of education, such was to be the object and the spirit of the order of women which Father de Tournély had in view, and it was to bear, as well as the society of men he had founded, the name of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Our Divine Lord Himself had revealed it to His servant. God was all in all to this true priest. "Be all for God and love Jesus alone!" was his constant recommendation to his brethren. His prayer reached the highest point of saintly contemplation. At the altar he was like an angel.

His greatest devotion was to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. He was often heard to say: "O adorable Heart of my Saviour, if men knew you, how they would love you." "One day," says Father Varin, "entering alone into his chamber, I found there, by chance, a paper on which these lines were written in his blood: 'I consecrate myself to the Hearts of Jesus and of His Mother. And, in consequence, I make a vow to employ my life in propagating devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Conception of Mary. I bind myself to renew this vow twice a year.' What could I do better than imitate this dear Father?" added his disciple. "Filled with this thought I hastily left the room, and having recollected myself before the altar, I made the same act without reservation."

God rewarded Father de Tournély for this ardent love by favouring him with most extraordinary lights. It was during one of these mysterious communications that he received directions to establish the Institute of the Sacred Heart.

In obedience to the Divine mandate he proposed the plan to his brethren, who unanimously approved of, and adopted it.

From that moment Father de Tournély was unwearied in his efforts to discover instruments for the erection of the edifice which God Himself had designed. Shortly afterwards he thought he had found this instrument in Madame Louise Adélaïde de Bourbon Condé, a very holy woman, whose virtues had been matured by sorrows and sufferings. With some other nuns, driven out of their cloisters by the

Revolution, but who had remained faithful to their vows, she came to Vienna, in order to place herself under Father de Tournély's direction, and to help in the work he wished to establish. But soon afterwards she withdrew into a convent of Trappistines, in Switzerland, and her community was finally dispersed.

Disappointed but not depressed by this first failure, Father de Tournély, at that very time, strongly expressed his hopes of success.

"I am sure that God wills it," he said one day to Father Varin. "This first attempt of mine is about to be extinguished, but the fire will be rekindled and will burn some day. I have made a mistake as to the time and the means God has in view for the establishment of this Society; but it will exist."

It does indeed exist, but it was not to be founded in his lifetime. He had been inspired with the idea of this great work; but the task of elaborating and establishing it was committed to another. He prepared the way for its success, he exhibited in his own person a perfect example of its peculiar spirit. This was merit enough for his brief existence. The Heart of Jesus gave him just time to communicate to the world Its Divine purposes, and then called His servant to Himself. Father de Tournély died young. His thirst of God consumed him.

The days of his illness were days of prayer and of constant self-surrender. One subject alone could for a moment turn away his thoughts from Heaven, where he was hastening; this was the institution of the future Society. He said to Father Varin: "My friend, you know all, I have told you everything. Do not act in a hurry; but await the time of the Lord." Just before he died, he seemed supernaturally enlightened, and on the very threshold of eternity loudly cried out, "It will be, it will be!"

It was on the 9th of July, 1797, that this servant of

God entered into the joy of his Master. He was then scarcely thirty years of age.

His plans were adopted and carried into execution by Father Varin, who had been elected Superior in his place. Wherever he went, this worthy successor of Father de Tournély was on the watch to discover the person who was destined to be the Foundress of the Society of the Sacred Heart.

He thought at one moment, as his predecessor had done, that a princess of the highest rank had been chosen by God for that work, no less a personage than the Archduchess Marie-Anne, sister of the Emperor of Germany; and indeed that princess, with two of her ladies of honour, Mdlles. Léopoldine and Louise Naudet, founded a convent at Rome which seemed likely to become the cradle of the Society.

But at that time Father Varin had taken an erroneous step. Though an excessive distrust of himself and of his abilities, he had been induced to unite the Society of the Fathers of the Sacred Heart with another founded by a certain Father Paccanari, a person of rash and domineering character, who, having gained his confidence, persuaded him to surrender to him the headship of the two societies, which were then combined under the name of Fathers of the Faith. In consequence of this union, the recent foundation of the archduchess was placed in the hands of the new Superior. But the spirit with which God had inspired Father de Tournély did not animate this priest. The work of this princess was not the fulfilment of the Divine promise made to Father de Tournély. It is not often that God chooses His instruments from amongst the great ones of earth, and it was meant perhaps that France, the head-quarters of revolutionary impiety, should also become the centre of religious renovation.

On the 19th of March, the feast of St. Joseph, Father

Varin returned to France, with some Fathers of the Faith of whom he had been named Superior. It was at that time he received the Abbé Barat into his community; and soon afterwards, in a conversation with him, he heard for the first time of the young girl who was to be the means, under God, of founding the new Society.

"One day," relates Father Varin, "when I was sitting alone with Father Barat, in the poor room which was at once our dormitory, refectory, kitchen, and even parlour, I asked him if there was anything which still attached him to the world, he replied that he had a *little sister*. Those words struck me, and I asked what was her age, and what she could do? He replied that she was between nineteen and twenty, that she had learned Latin and Greek, could fluently translate Virgil and Homer, and had capacity enough to make a good rhetorician; that she thought of soon entering a convent, perhaps as a Carmelite, but that she was then spending some weeks with her family."

The fact of the existence of this sister, and at the same time spiritual daughter and pupil, of a man well qualified to judge of a person's virtue and talents; the classical education she had received, the humble condition, religious vocation, and, moreover, the age of this young girl, which was exactly that at which the mind is most susceptible of being moulded and directed; all combined to make a strong impression on Father Varin, and when Mdlle. Barat, on her return to Paris, was introduced to him, his previsions were realized.

"At the end of a month," he goes on to say, "Mdlle. Sophie Barat returned to Paris. I went to see her, and found her to be a person of very delicate temperament, extremely modest and timid. The presentiment I had felt the first time that her brother had spoken to me about her became stronger and more decided. It all seemed evident to me, and I could not help mentally exclaiming: 'What a

foundation-stone she will be!' And she did indeed prove to be the stone on which God had chosen to build the Society of the Sacred Heart."

When Father Varin communicated to Sophie's brother his views as to her vocation, he entered into them with the deepest thankfulness. He saw how he had been led by God to prepare her for it, without being exactly conscious of what he was doing, and he hastened to surrender her guidance into the hands of one who had received light and grace for that purpose. His own task he considered fulfilled. He had tilled and weeded the soil by dint of mortification. It required another hand than his to cultivate the growth of a more expansive piety and sweet liberty of spirit.

Father Varin had as much decision of character, but a great deal more gentleness than Father Barat. This charity, this firmness, he was about to exercise in his guidance of Sophie Barat. He took care to leave perfect freedom to her soul. This was especially necessary at the moment when she had to make an important decision, which he felt must be a spontaneous act.

After much thinking and praying, he one day asked her what she intended to be. Sophie replied that she believed herself called to the religious state, and that she wished to enter a Carmelite convent. That life seemed to her to embody, as it were, the love of Jesus Christ, and a spirit of sacrifice amounting almost to heroism. Her director rejoiced to find this feeling in the future daughter of the Sacred Heart. He began by assuring her that her holy desires would be fulfilled, and then went on to say that it would nevertheless be desirable to take into consideration the peculiarities of her education, and the extraordinary degree of cultivation her mind had received. It remained to be seen whether God, Who had given her the means and the power of acquiring so much knowledge, intended her

to bury these gifts in the cloister, or to utilize them by becoming an apostle in the work of education, for which they so well adapted her. And then, in order to give her an insight into the designs of Providence, he related to her the details of Father de Tournély's life and death, and showed her how his predictions seemed likely to be fulfilled by the foundation which the Archduchess Marie-Anne was making at Rome. He reminded her of the needs of France, and ended by telling the astonished girl that she was called by God to cooperate in the establishment of the new Institute.

Surprised at these disclosures and at his proposal, which, however, tallied with some of her own desires, Sophie hesitated. Her incapacity alarmed her, and she humbly replied: "Father, I will think about it."

But there was little room for thought or doubt on the subject. Sophie's whole life had visibly tended to this end, and she received from her director such strong assurance as to her vocation, that she accepted his proposal with generous self-devotion, and that absolute reliance on God which was to become more and more the essence, as it were, of her spiritual life. "For my part," she used to say, with an indescribable feeling of humility, "I knew nothing, I foresaw nothing, I simply accepted everything that was proposed to me." Her determination had a great effect on the little Society of the Rue de Touraine. A very holy person and a great friend of Sophie's, Octavie Bailly, was particularly struck with it; she was thirty years of age, and her thirst for contemplation and self-sacrifice attracted her to the Carmelite Order, but she was nevertheless induced to follow her friend in this new path.

Mdlle. Loquet, another of Father Varin's penitents, was also admitted into the projected community. Her talents had attracted observation; she had written some works of piety in the allegorical style at that time in fashion. "I

wish she were less known and less admired," Father Varin used to say; he wished everything to be as humble and obscure as possible in those beginnings. Lastly, Madame Duval's servant, Margaret, a good girl and an accomplished seamstress, solicited and obtained the favour of joining the little congregation as a lay-sister.

From that time forth there arose amongst those friends, now become sisters in religion, an ardent emulation in the service of God. Father Varin had given them a rule of prayer, meditation, work, and spiritual exercises. Strangers to the world, isolated from the noise of Paris and from public events, hidden in the lonely quarter of the Marais, they lived in community at the house of Madame Duval. Mdlle. Loquet was the only one who did not reside under the same roof; she joined her friends on the days and hours of the Father's instruction.

It was in that humble home under the protection of our Lord Jesus Christ, Whose labours it was to imitate, that the real foundations were laid of the Society of the Sacred Heart. Later on, Father Varin speaking to his spiritual daughters, said: "When your first mothers were only four in number, I visited them every morning after Mass, and we conferred together about our Society. One of the first questions proposed was this, 'What ought to be our spirit?' The answer was soon given; all with one voice exclaimed, 'Let it be generosity.'"

This generous self-devotion evinced itself by a great zeal for good works. Sophie's charity would fain have embraced the whole world. She told her novices, in after years, that at that time, a missioner, who was about to return to Madagascar, one day visited her community and entertained them with an account of his labours. Later on, he wrote to inquire if they did not wish to follow the example of Marie d'Agréda, by consecrating themselves to the salvation of idolaters. When Sophie Barat read this letter it gave her

an interior conviction that the Society of the Sacred Heart was to embrace all the universe: this feeling sank deeply into her soul, even as if it had been a call from God. Before replying to the letter, she sought advice, and received this answer: "No, you are to remain in France; your work is there; you will scarcely ever leave it." She submitted to God's will, Who, as she expressed it, did not choose to accept her for that work, and contented herself with offering up the following prayer: "As Thou wilt not accede to my desire, my Lord, suffer me at least to ask that I may have a companion who will one day do that work instead of me, and better than me." We shall see in the course of this history that her prayer was heard.

Father Barat's spirit of discipline had enabled him to prepare the future foundress for her mission, but Father Varin, who was called to establish and extend the work, was endowed with the heart of an apostle. He began by taking charge of the Hospital of La Salpêtrière, where he spent days and nights, giving missions to six thousand sick persons, administering first Communion to three hundred men on the same day, baptizing two hundred grown up persons, and presenting five hundred others for the Sacrament of Confirmation. After having thus commenced his career of labour, he proceeded to visit all the environs of Paris, rousing the population, which had lost the habits of faith and Christian practice, and bringing back within the fold of the Church, not only the flock, but sometimes also the shepherd. Indefatigable, intrepid, and at the same time always calm, always gay, always humble, compassionating every one and counting himself as nothing, provided he advanced the interests of God, Father Varin fulfilled his friend, Father de Tournély's, prediction, that in the religious life he would still be a soldier. Inflamed, as he was, with zeal, he did not need much study to enable him to speak; he had but to give vent to his own feelings

in order to enkindle in the souls of others the love which burnt in his heart.

On the evening of the 13th of November, 1800, the feast of St. Stanislaus Kostka, the four postulants went to the chapel of the Fathers of the Faith, Benediction was given, and when the congregation departed, they remained alone, kneeling before the altar. Father Varin, who knew their thoughts, said to them: "You cannot, then, make up your minds to leave the good Master, Whose blessing you have just received? Was not that enough for you? Is there anything else you have to ask Him?"

The Father then spoke to them of the happiness of consecrating oneself wholly to Christ, as the young Saint had done whose feast they were celebrating. Excited by his subject, he spoke with such extraordinary and admirable fervour that he communicated to them his own enthusiasm. They longed to give themselves to God, and the Father promised that they should soon make their act of consecration. The 21st of November, feast of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin, was fixed upon for that great purpose. After a preparatory retreat, this happy day arrived; the little chapel in the Rue de Touraine was decorated to the best of their ability. Mass was said by Father Varin, and after the Elevation the postulants pronounced their vow of consecration to the Heart of Jesus Christ, and afterwards received Him in the Blessed Eucharist.

Sophie's joy was inexpressible. She had at last made that complete dedication of herself which she had been pining for so long. This solemn act, this first pledge of union with our Lord, accomplished in secret, before the altar of a private chapel, at a time when the churches were still everywhere closed or dismantled, made an indelible impression on her ardent soul. She had reached the promised land, and a new world opened before her.

The 21st of November is still looked upon and solem-

nized by the Society of the Sacred Heart, as the date of its foundation.

The Society of the Sacred Heart was now constituted. It remained to be seen where and when Providence intended its first establishment to take place.

In the month of May, 1802, Father Varin happened to go to Amiens to give a mission, and met there a very holy priest, a M. Bicheron, who had opened a school for the children of the nobility. He soon found that this venerable man was an ardent promoter of the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and this led Father Varin to speak to him of the Society he had just founded in Paris. The Abbé Bicheron entered warmly into all the Father's plans, and soon afterwards sent him two young persons who were under his direction, and whom he considered fitted for the new Institute.

One of them was Mdlle. Geneviève Deshayes, a noble-hearted generous girl, delicate in health, but so full of energy and courage, that the vigour of her soul supplied the place of physical strength. The death of her parents had left her in an independent position and possessed of considerable means; the house of a married brother, to whom she was much attached, was her home. Geneviève cared a little for the world, and very much for dress, but she cared still more for our Lord, the Church, the welfare of souls, and the poor. During the Revolution, her courageous charity had effected wonders in behalf of priests, religious and *émigrés*. She and her friends, M. Bicheron, Madame de Rumigny, and Mdlle. Tripier, were the founders and leaders of every work of piety or mercy in Amiens. In a graphic sketch of her own life, she says: "To extend the Devotion to the Sacred Heart was our principal object." A decided attraction to the religious life rewarded her activity in the service of God; but still in uncertainty as to her special vocation, she simply left the future in God's hands.

When in the spring of 1801 Father Varin came to Amiens to preach, Mdlle. Deshayes listened attentively to his sermons, and after some hesitation, she consulted the good Father, who received her kindly, but, at first, only spoke to her in general terms of the love of Jesus Christ and of His adorable Heart.

It was during a subsequent visit to Amiens that he declared to Mdlle. Deshayes his views as to her vocation, and spoke to her of the foundation at Rome, and especially of the community at Paris. A few words sufficed to describe each of the novices till he came to Sophie; the good Father dwelt at greater length on her perfections, and then stopped short, and raising his eyes to Heaven, paused, as if unable to express all he thought. At last, he ended by saying: "But you will soon make her acquaintance, for Jesus Christ calls you to be with her, a spouse of His Sacred Heart. Now, my child, His will is made known to you: let it be your part to correspond with it."

Mdlle. Deshayes describes to us, in her enthusiastic manner, the result of this appeal. "The Father gave me his blessing, and I left him enraptured. I joined at once in heart that Society, which I had just heard of. To draw life from the Heart of God; to grow, to live and to die there; to go out of It to win souls for Him; to come back to It laden with conquests. What a wonderful vocation! Much as I respected them, I had always felt a kind of repugnance to other religious orders; but in this one, from the first, everything attracted me as if I had long known and loved it."

The other postulant, who had also been sent to Father Varin by M. Bicheron, was Henriette Grosier. Like almost all the first recruits of the new Society, she had aspired to be a Carmelite. But she soon perceived that the Institute of the Sacred Heart combined the life of Carmel with an Apostleship of its own.

The tie which detained her in the world was her devotion to her aunt, Madame Hyacinthe Devaux, formerly a religious, who had brought her up, and whom she assisted in the management of a school in the town of Amiens. Notwithstanding the great merit of the mistresses, this school did not succeed. M. Bicheron suggested that it might be intrusted to the daughters of the Sacred Heart, and Father Varin hailed the thought as an inspiration. This plan had also the advantage of removing the obstacles in the way of Mdlle. Grosier's vocation; her aunt indeed began by raising many objections to the proposal, but they were finally overruled and an arrangement entered into. Mdlle. Loquet came to Amiens and stayed at the school in order to acquaint herself with the habits of the place. At last, on the 15th of October, 1801, the feast of St. Theresa, the agreement was signed, and the Sacred Heart took possession of its first house.

Mdlle. Deshayes was only waiting for that event, to bid farewell to the world. On the anniversary of the death of the Blessed Margaret Mary, the 17th of October, the daughters of the Sacred Heart began their religious life at Amiens. In the meantime, Sophie Barat had been paying a visit to her family, previously to a long parting. Mdlle. Octavie Bailly was waiting for her in Paris and, as soon as she returned, the two friends set out together, on the 13th of November, and joined their new Sisters at Amiens.

The first impression produced by Sophie on her companions was most favourable. Mdlle. Deshayes thus describes it: "What a good effect her arrival had on our souls! We had heard much of her virtue, piety, talents, and learning. We had all felt to love Sister Sophie, even before we had seen her. But when she came amongst us, her angelic modesty, her sweetness, something about her peculiar to herself won our hearts at once."

The house had to be organized. Mdlle. Loquet was

named Superior, and Sophie Barat had the charge of the higher classes with the religious instruction of the younger pupils. Father Varin wished the new work to be inaugurated by a retreat, and a very fervent one it was. "Do you remember that retreat?" Madame Barat wrote thirty years afterwards to Mother Grosier. "God alone!—that was the dear motto we wrote wherever we could. A God of goodness was inspiring us even then with that desire to live for Him alone, which He gives to souls whom He calls to solid virtues and to the way of the Cross."

At the end of the retreat, Father Varin asked each of them separately whether they would promise to be faithful to the new Institute. Mdlle. Octavie Bailly, who was still thinking of the Carmelite Order, shrank from giving this promise. Father Varin had to break to Sophie that her friend did not intend on this occasion to follow her to the altar. This was a severe blow to the heart of one whose affection for her friends was both deep and strong. But she soon recovered herself, and quietly said: "I do not wish to be influenced by personal feelings. It is not my own satisfaction, but what pleases God, I have to seek. I think I am following His will, and that is enough for me; so I shall stay and do my best."

On the 21st of November, the anniversary of their first consecration, the postulants went to Madame de Rumigny's little chapel, and there Sophie Barat renewed her consecration. Father Varin took as the text of the sermon he preached on this occasion, the words of St. Elizabeth to the Mother of God: "Blessed art thou that hast believed, because those things shall be accomplished that were spoken to thee by the Lord." This prevision of a future which he dimly discerned, but which his faith hailed with rapture, filled his hearers as well as himself with a strange emotion.

What were these young women going to do? What was to be their fate? They did not know it themselves, so

Mother Barat used often to say, and so Mother Deshayes writes: "We were like people groping in the dark. This has always been the way in which Providence has led us, only lifting the veil by degrees and gradually disclosing to us God's will. Whenever Father Varin came, then everything went on progressing, increasing, and assuming a shape. It was to him that God had given His own spirit to guide us. We felt this most thoroughly."

When Father Varin resumed his apostolic journeys, he left the little community under the spiritual guidance of the Fathers of the Faith, who had taken possession of their College at Amiens. It was on this account that the new religious were generally called "Ladies of the Faith." The title of "Ladies of Christian Instruction" was also given to them. They did not as yet venture to assume in public the name of the Sacred Heart. It had been recently used by the Vendean Royalists as their badge, and was looked upon in consequence as a seditious emblem. Octavie Bailly was sent to the convent at Rome to make a trial of her vocation, and only four teaching Sisters were left for the heavy work of those laborious beginnings.

It is difficult indeed to imagine anything more humble or poor than the foundation at Amiens at that time. The building where the Society of the Sacred Heart was first established was situated in the Rue Saint Martin-Bleu-Dieu. It was a small private house, the ground-floor of which was arranged so as to form two schoolrooms. Above were the dormitories. A little garden at the back served as a playground for the twenty pupils made over to the nuns by Madame Devaux, and afforded them the shade of one solitary hazel tree. In a garret, under the roof, a chapel was contrived, the first chapel owned by the nuns of the Sacred Heart. To the inexpressible joy of the Sisters, they obtained the privilege of possessing Jesus Christ in their humble sanctuary.

At five o'clock in the morning, a blow, struck with a stick against the ceiling of the dormitory, gave the signal for rising. As soon as their eyes were opened, the Sisters laid hold of their crucifixes. That was their happy moment, Mother Barat tells us, and, in her case, that happy moment lasted from morning till night. One of the first instructions given by Father Varin had been a commentary on the words of Martha to Mary: "The Master is here and calleth for thee." From that day forward those words had been their watchword. They used to say to each other, "The Master is here;" and the sound of the bell summoning them to their various duties, however unwelcome at the moment it might happen to be, was always looked upon as the voice of that Sovereign Master. It was by the constant practice of obedience, mortification, and the annihilation of private judgment, that they directed their course.

The destitution of the house was complete. Six francs was the whole of Sister Barat's fortune when she arrived at Amiens. Mdlle. Deshayes was indeed more wealthy, but she had impoverished herself by her charities; and it was only by selling, at a low price, her furniture, her lace, and all the valuable articles of her wardrobe, that this generous soul was able to procure money to meet the first necessary expenses. She tells us that it was with all her heart she did it. "I would have sold myself, and been willingly cut into pieces for that dear Society, to whom I had nothing to give but my love." And Madame Barat says: "We managed to make both ends meet, even though we were obliged to earn our own support, and also to work for persons outside; but we lived without cares, happy in the midst of privations, which reminded us of the life of our Lord at Nazareth." The food of the mistresses was on a par with the poverty of their abode. They dined on the remains of their pupils' meals, who were always first and amply served.

The hardest trials were those which cut to the very root of self-esteem. Human respect had to be thoroughly conquered, in order not to shrink from standing, broom in hand, at the door of a room, or from appearing in the little round cap and singular dress invented by Mdlle. Loquet, and from wearing it, moreover, on Sundays at High Mass in the Church of St. Jacques, and in the fashionable promenade of La Hottoie, where the Sisters had to walk with their little pupils, who sometimes broke loose for the express purpose of making their poor mistresses run after them.

In the evening, when the children were in bed, and the Superior had retired to her abode, the three Sisters met by the side of the kitchen fire and worked with their needles. Mdlle. Deshayes thus describes what she calls "the happy hour:" "It was a wonderful pleasure, a great refreshment, to meet in this way. When we were sitting there, our three heads close together and our hearts united by a very pure affection, of which God alone was the link, we were the very picture of happy intimacy. Sister Sophie, always burning with zeal, spoke of her longings for the Canadian Mission, and Mdlle. Grosier had the same ardent desires. I listened to them, feeling my own nothingness, and limiting my zeal to France." The holy friendship of these chosen souls infused into their lives an unspeakable charm and supported them under all their trials

As to Sister Sophie, she made fresh progress every day in the love of God. This was the period of her hidden life, a life so deeply hidden in Jesus Christ that it escaped notice. Recollected and habitually silent, she was on that account but little appreciated by Mdlle. Loquet, who could not understand the interior spirit of that remarkable soul, and gave it as her opinion "that the poor girl did not know how to utter two words." Her companions judged more correctly. Mdlle. Deshayes says that Sister Barat was far more advanced in virtue than themselves. Sometimes,

however, they did complain that she was always silently absorbed, and did not see what was going on around her. "It seemed," she adds, "as if God engrossed her entirely; the sweetness of her voice, the expression of her countenance, the dignity and modesty of her whole demeanour conveyed the impression that her conversation was in heaven. Strangers were almost always struck with her appearance, and stopped to inquire who she was. It often happened to me to be asked that question.

Father Varin revisited Amiens in the summer of 1802. He admired in Sophie's soul, and in that of Mdlle. Deshayes, the workings of God's grace. The latter expressed an ardent desire to pronounce her vows, the former, although prepared to make them, out of humility and a spirit of abandonment, made no request. The Superior decided that they should both make their profession on Monday, the 7th of June, the day after Pentecost.

The great day at last arrived; but when it was time to go to Madame de Rumigny's chapel, where the ceremony was to take place, Sister Sophie was missing. They searched and found her seated under the hazel tree in the court. "She had fallen into an extraordinary state of abstraction, and was sitting motionless, without seeming to see or to notice anything that was going on around her." They had to wait a little while before she recovered herself, and those who saw her in this ecstasy, were impressed with the conviction, that during that time God had spoken to her soul. When her consciousness returned, Sophie was led to the altar, there to consecrate herself with all the ardour of her loving heart to her Divine Spouse.

This was a happy year for the little Society. A free school was opened for the children of the poor and was numerously attended. Nothing could be more in accordance with the spirit of the new Institute than such a work of charity, and we shall find it carried on, ever since, in

all the houses of the Sacred Heart. Two ladies, already nuns before the Revolution, Madame Capy and Madame Baudemont, joined the Society. The boarding-school rapidly increased, and the house in the Rue Martin-Bleu-Dieu which had become too small, was given up. A larger one was taken in the Rue Neuve, and also a country house where the children went for recreation. But these were only the preludes to greater changes. Mdlle. Loquet, then at the head of the little Society, was intelligent, zealous, and a person of really solid virtue, but imperfectly trained to the religious life, and altogether unfit to govern. Madame Barat says, in speaking of her: "Our guide did not possess the spirit which our Lord intended us to have; we were conscious of it and silently lamented it." In consequence of this deficiency, there was in her whole way of acting an unfortunate combination of inconsistency, incoherency, abruptness, and weakness, which Mdlle. Deshayes thus accounts for:

"The violent efforts," she says, "which this Superior had to make, in order to accomplish a work which she was not capable of performing, threw her into a state of pre-occupation and agitation which we could hardly understand, but we were nevertheless conscious that it was not the spirit which had been instilled into us, the spirit of Fénelon and of St. Francis of Sales. But we did not open our lips on the subject."

Father Varin exercised the greatest forbearance towards this good Superior, but when he found that advice was useless, he was at last obliged to tell her that he thought her unsuited to the work of the Sacred Heart, and on the 8th of December, Mdlle. Loquet left the Society, and returned to Paris, where she resumed the direction of her industrial school, and her former good works. "Whatever may have been the faults of her government, and even on account of those faults," as Mdlle. Deshayes observes, "she rendered a

great service to the Sisters, by obliging them to live a life of childlike simplicity, which kept them, as it were, under the hand of God, without knowing in what direction He was leading them." They went on very happily in this captivity of spirit, just as if they neither saw nor understood anything.

The next thing to do was to appoint a new Superior. The previsions of Sophie's companions at once pointed to her. No one better fulfilled the first and indispensable condition required by our Lord in those to whom He commits the care of His sheep, that is, to love Him much, to love Him more than the others; but it seemed doubtful whether that life of love, all hidden in Jesus Christ, would be consistent with the energy necessary for fulfilling the duties of Superior. On the eve of the nomination, the choice having been already secretly made, Madame Louise Naudet, who had come from the house in Rome, and was visiting Amiens on this important occasion, held a conference, during which she first addressed herself to the whole community, and spoke to them of the duty of devoting all their faculties to the service of God, and then, turning to Sister Sophie, she reproached her in strong terms for her too great reserve, and ended by saying that the time had come when she must go out of herself.

"Go out of herself;" did this really mean that she must abandon the dear interior sanctuary, where she had found heaven, and devote herself altogether to an exterior life? Alarmed by this order, the poor Sister answered: "And never go in again, Mother?" They all laughed. Even the Sisters saw nothing in this touching exclamation but a childlike simplicity, which is, however, one of the most special characteristics of the saints. The whole of Madame Barat's life was marked by the sweetness and charm which it imparts.

On the following day Father Varin, assisted by Father Roger, went to the Sisters to strike a decisive blow; he did

so in the familiar and original way peculiar to that good Father. Declaring that he had come for the purpose of examining his spiritual daughters in Christian doctrine, he began with Sister Sophie. "Sister," said he, "you are the youngest, it is therefore proper that I should address to you the first and easiest questions. Why has God created you and placed you on the earth?" "To know Him," she replied, "to love Him, and to serve Him." "What is it to serve God?" "It is to do His will," she answered. "Well," returned the Father, authoritatively, "His will is that you should be Superior."

Thunderstruck by this blow, Sophie fell down at his feet, and bursting into tears, implored the Founder to have pity on her. Father Varin was inflexible. "Not that I was unmoved," he afterwards said to the daughters of the Sacred Heart, "by the grief of your poor Mother. She almost died of it. The only obstacle I ever found in her was her humility. During ten years she never ceased to entreat me to release her, but she might have spared her breath, she did not move me an inch, fortunately for her daughters." It was on the 21st of December that this nomination was made, with the consent of the whole community. Mother Barat, as we shall henceforward call her, was then just twenty-three years of age.

CHAPTER III.

Mother Barat Superior at Amiens.

1801—1804.

A FEW days after her nomination, the new Superior assembled the Sisters and spoke to them of her confusion, her fears, and her devotion to the little community, in words so full of abnegation and charity that all who heard her were deeply affected; and still more were they touched when, kneeling at the feet of each of her daughters, she kissed them with a humility which filled them with astonishment. This act of abasement plainly showed that her idea of her new position was founded on the words her Divine Master addressed to His Apostles: "He that is greater among you let him become as the younger, and he that is the leader as he that serveth."

Not once, during more than half a century of government, did the humble Superior belie the pledge given on that day.

Father Varin had resumed his apostolic missions in Paris and the provinces, but without losing sight of the work which he considered "as the most important of his enterprises." He continued to direct Mother Barat by letters, and his direction can be summed up in two words —*courage* and *confidence.* That was his maxim. He taught the souls he guided to wait for God's inspirations as to undertakings for His glory, and for evident indications of

His will. But when that had once been done, to exert unsparingly the highest degree of human energy, in constant subordination to the Divine omnipotence, and to feel certain that God works with those who work for Him.

At the same time that he was strengthening his spiritual daughter by his careful advice, Father Varin lost no opportunity of encouraging her by the most admirable examples. Amiens was, at that time, the home of many pious souls, and a kind of nursery for holy works, which took their rise in that city, and thence, spreading over France, renewed the face of the land.

It was there that the Congregation of the Sisters of Notre Dame was established also by Father Varin. In the Superior of that house Madame Barat found a perfect model of zeal and Christian energy.

Marie Rose Julie Billiart, the good Julie, as she is called in the annals of the Sacred Heart, had been, even in her childhood, the instructor and catechist of the poor and the forlorn. She was the daughter of peasants, and when quite a little girl, in her native village, used to evangelize the reapers with whom she worked in the fields. In her laborious youth, when travelling from place to place with her little stock of hosiery which she sold to the cottagers, she instructed them in the catechism. Having done the work of an apostle, she shared the honours of persecution. Tracked like a wild beast during the Reign of Terror, she, nevertheless, all infirm as she was, managed to procure for proscribed persons means of safety that she disdained for herself. The venerable and saintly M. de Lamarche, a priest of great faith and the apostle of his country, sustained her in this arduous conflict.

In 1800, Father Varin had persuaded Julie to undertake the instruction of the children of the poor. In her infirm state nothing but a miracle could enable her to carry on this work, and that miracle was vouchsafed. She was

almost instantaneously cured one day of a paralysis which had lasted for more than twenty-five years. That day was the feast of the Sacred Heart. It was to the worship and the imitation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus that Father Varin had specially consecrated the Congregation of the Sisters of Notre Dame, and he had placed their Institute and their vows under the patronage of the Sacred Heart of Mary.

The Orphanage of the Rue de Noyon and the Institution of the Rue Neuve, thus blended in these Sacred Hearts by a union of spirit and affection, were encouraged and maintained by the correspondence of their common father and guide.

Of course the Founder wished the two societies to remain distinct, their end not being the same, but he excited them to a mutual emulation in the love of Jesus Christ; and Mother Julie used often to say that she "found much benefit from conversing with little Mother Barat." But the most important assistance which Father Varin secured for his daughter was that of his priests in the College of Amiens.

Under their able supervision, the studies were organized and the rules constituted. The teachers worked day and night. "Tell your companions," Father Varin wrote to the new Superior, "that, far away as I am, I never leave off shouting to you, Courage and confidence! In this world work and trouble, the whole of eternity for repose. Not but that I very well know you do not grudge labour and that you all work with ardour."

It was indeed in this spirit that the Superior had undertaken her new duties. We soon find her spiritual Father congratulating her on the vigour she displayed, which, in a person of so gentle and diffident a character, could only result from the grace of vocation. "I approve with all my heart," he writes to her in July, 1803, "of the operations

which you perform like a good surgeon, who, to save his patient, is not afraid of cutting off a limb. It is with real pleasure that I observe the energy and holy freedom of action which God gives you. Go on exercising it without any fear of being reproached for going too far. Be strict as to the observance of the Rule, but above all as to the maintenance of mutual charity."

The Superior gave, indeed, a constant example of the charity she was thus exhorted to promote. Some of the Sisters fell ill at that time; there was nothing she did not do to relieve them, or any labour she did not undertake to spare them fatigue. Father Varin was obliged to exert his authority to prevent her from overworking herself to a degree which would have endangered her life. In the midst of all her labours and of almost incessant sufferings, she was always ready to attend to the Sisters and the children, and to help them in every possible way. Beloved and respected as she was, Mother Barat found it easy to introduce the spirit and cultivate the habit of kindness in ruling, and facility in obeying, which the Sacred Heart looks upon as supereminently essential.

The community soon increased in number. It was through the missions preached in the south of France, by Father Varin and other members of his Society, that the little Institute at Amiens obtained several valuable recruits. It is a remarkable fact that most of these early vocations to the Sacred Heart were vouchsafed to persons who had gone through the ordeal of the Revolutionary persecution. Those days of fiery trial had awakened and tested the zeal and self-devotion which led them to an Order in which those who had been devoted to exterior works of charity, and knew the immense need France had of apostolic labourers found ample scope for their religious ardour, and those who longed in a spirit of reparation and self-sacrifice to make compensation to the outraged Heart of our Lord, could

lead a hidden life of adoring love. There is scarcely one amongst the first Mothers of the new Institute whose history is not deeply interesting as well as edifying, but the limits of this short work only allow us to make a brief mention of a few amongst these early associates of Mother Barat, such as Mdlle. de Terrail, the sole remaining descendant of a family which counted amongst its ancestors Bayard the Chevalier, *sans peur et sans reproche.* Educated in the famous house of St. Cyr, gifted with rare abilities for teaching, she made at the age of thirty-two an offering to the Sacred Heart of a life dedicated from childhood to every species of good works. Then followed Madame Catherine de Charbonnel de Jussac, whose name was associated with traditions of heroism, and her youth sanctified by suffering. During the days of Terror she had devoted herself to the service of the Church and its proscribed ministers, secretly making vestments for the priests and conveying the sacred vessels of the altar from town to town, at the risk of her life. As soon as she heard of the Society of the Sacred Heart she felt that it was there God called her. At the age of twenty-nine, mounted on a wretched horse, she went in quest of the Founder, and asked him to admit her. "You will find a very young Superior," he objected, "younger than yourself." "So much the better," she said, "my obedience will be the more meritorious," and at once she set out for Amiens.

Father Varin told Mother Barat that the new postulant was too timid, and that she would have to teach her to overcome her excessive shyness. Otherwise, he thought she would be pleased with her. Not even he had discerned that this humble childlike girl possessed not only the qualities which had made her a heroine of charity, but that she would prove, as her Superior discovered after a time, that she had the best head in the house.

Then some time afterwards Félicité Desmarquest joined

the Society. She was the eleventh of the sixteen children of a peasant in Picardy, whose family had always held the traditionary attachment to religion so often found amongst the French yeomanry. Even in her childhood she had visited the prisons like a little angel of consolation. The example of the faithful priests whom her father had sheltered, and whom she had with a courageous discretion assisted in concealing, the sight of all the miseries the Church of France was enduring, of the Sacred Mysteries celebrated in secret in barns and caves; all that strange contrast of proscription and of charity, of impiety and faith, had matured her mind, strengthened her character, and given her a decided vocation to a life of virginity, penance, and active apostleship. A pious monk of Prémontré, who had been himself twice reprieved at the foot of the scaffold, said of Félicité Desmarquest: "If God vouchsafes to re-establish the monastic orders in France, what services this soul will render to religion!" It was to the Carmelites that, at first, this loving heart felt attracted, but another venerable priest, who had directed her conscience and knew the secrets of her soul, on his death-bed sent the following message to his spiritual daughter: "I believe that I am dying, and as I never again hope to see Mdlle. Desmarquest, tell her from me, that God does not call her to a Carmelite cloister, but to the Sacred Heart." These words, uttered on the brink of eternity, were accepted by Félicité as an order from Heaven. She obeyed the mandate and, at the age of twenty-four, joined an Order which, during her life and since her death, has reckoned her amongst the holiest of its daughters.

From a very different sphere came another of these first postulants of the house of Amiens. Henriette Ducis was born at Versailles. She was a niece of the poet of that name. She had braved every danger in seeking out our Lord in the secret hiding-places where He was then con-

cealed. Her greatest happiness was to serve Mass for the proscribed priests. Her bright joyous volatile nature, and a vivacity as gay and impulsive as that of a child, had won for her the surname of "the Bird." Endowed with natural gifts rather than with much knowledge, she owed the facility with which she conversed and used her pen to the habits of associating with the clever people who met at her uncle's house. The world admired her, and was greatly astonished when she abandoned it to lead an obscure life of labour and poverty. She looked so happy on the day that she was going to the convent, that the driver of the diligence remarked that he supposed the lady was going to be married!

If on the one hand God was favouring the rapid and solid growth of the Society, that blessing was in the meantime purchased by many sufferings. Mother Barat had been only a short time Superior, when a series of trials began to evince the way by which it was God's intention to lead her. In the month of June, overwhelmed with work, she sank into a state of langour and exhaustion that occasioned great alarm. In the month of September, Madame Capy, one of the Sisters, went out of her mind; this provoked ill-natured comments, and was made a pretext for attacks against the little establishment. The Government of that day did not disguise the hostile feelings it entertained towards a Society suspected of sharing all the opinions of its founders, the Fathers of the Faith. It was amidst these obstacles that the year 1803 painfully elapsed.

Mother Barat's illness increased so much during the year 1804 that she was sent to Paris for advice and care. It was ascertained that cancer was the cause of her terrible sufferings, and she was also supposed to be falling into a rapid decline. Some fragments of her letters at that time show that it was her own impression that she was soon going to die. "Poor body," she writes, "what wilt thou

be in a short time? Let them do with it what they like; I am not anxious about that, only I must improve the time that remains to me."

In the midst of her sufferings she was serene and joyful. "Yes, I suffer," she writes, "but the words, 'it is God's will,' drive away all uneasiness, cheerfulness returns, we must be patient. A few more minutes of pain and then I shall suffer no more. Is it worth while to spare oneself so much?" It was alleged that her life was important for the Society; she answered: "Who are we that we should fancy God has need of us? Can He not, even out of stones, raise up children to Abraham? I assure you that this thought is a great consolation to me when I think of my death."

She spent the months of March and April of 1804 with the Sisters of Charity, whose skilful nursing somewhat restored her health, and then was moved to the house of a Madame Bergeron, a rich and kind lady, who made it her object to amuse her guest in every way she could devise.

She describes this trial in one of her letters: "I feel inexpressibly weary when I am not in my own room, to such a degree that at times I get quite confused and hardly know what I am saying or doing. Thank God! I have our Lord to lean upon. Nothing short of that consciousness would enable me to behave myself before all the people I have to see here. My dear hostess is bent upon my making acquaintance with all her relations, and I really think her family must be as numerous as the Patriarch Jacob's. It seems never to come to an end." This hospitable lady had just purchased the Abbaye-aux-Bois, and there was some question of making it a convent of the Sacred Heart. The Amiens Sisters wanted Mother Barat to be seen and known, in order that she might create an impression favourable to the Society. She only laughed at this idea. "What should I do amongst smart people?" she asks. "Some of them,

perhaps, on seeing such a strange kind of Superior, might find occasion to glorify God, Who makes use of the meanest instruments, but others would sneer, and St. Ignatius forbids us, for the sake of the Society, to expose ourselves to ridicule." The plan of the Abbaye-aux-Bois came to nothing. "God knows better than we do what is best for us," wrote the Superior, "and glad as I should have been to see that foundation made in Paris, I am quite satisfied."

In the month of May Mother Barat returned to Amiens. Startling news awaited her there. Since his visit to Rome in 1802, Father Varin had conceived great doubts as to the uprightness of Father Paccanari's intentions. An eminent Jesuit, Father Rozaven, had now entirely enlightened him on the subject.

The separation took place on the 4th of June, 1804, and it entailed, as a necessary consequence, that of the daughters of the Sacred Heart from the Dilette of Rome. This was, in reality, a happy event for the Institute, which remained, from that time forward, under the sole direction of its Founder, and followed the course which had been originally marked out for it by the Divine Heart of our Lord. But at first, Mother Barat could see nothing in that separation but an increase of her own burthen. It seemed as if the Society was now to rest altogether on her weak shoulders, and the load seemed too much for her to bear.

She had indeed the consolation of welcoming back from Rome the companion of her early religious days, Mdlle. Octavie Bailly, on whom she founded the most solid hopes. She immediately made her Mistress of Novices, but Mdlle. Bailly, following the attraction which had always drawn her to the Carmelites, left the Sacred Heart to enter a convent of that Order. This was a great sorrow, and also a great loss to Mother Barat.

The extreme inconvenience of the house in the Rue Neuve, was another source of anxiety. It was made up of

a number of disjointed buildings, and it was in consequence difficult to exercise sufficient watchfulness over the children. This was often a torment to the consciences of the Mistresses. "What shall I say of your position and of that of your community?" Father Varin had written the year before. "There is something so extraordinary about it, that I cannot but think that God has His own views on the subject. Leave it to Him to work them out."

So many dangers seemed to beset at once the newly-founded Institute, that the Superior, with a truly maternal instinct, acted as mothers sometimes do when they see their child in danger, she consecrated it to the Blessed Virgin. The feast of the Assumption was approaching. The Sisters made a novena, during which they spent in prayer every moment that was not devoted to their dear scholars. On the day of the feast the Society was consecrated to Mary, and a promise made to renew that novena and that consecration every year, at the same epoch, as long as the little Society should exist.

Mother Barat says, in allusion to this consecration: "The Blessed Virgin heard our prayers, and assisted us in a degree beyond what we could have hoped or imagined. It was as if the little Society had been suddenly disengaged, by a favourable breeze, from the obstructions which had impeded its progress, and now resumed its onward course." They soon purchased the house of the Oratorians, originally built by the Cardinal de Bérulle's congregation, and recently occupied by the Fathers of the Faith as a college. The principal part of the house was in the most severe architectural style of the seventeenth century, and the wings and offices, which were less solidly constructed, extended along the Rue de l'Oratoire to the Rue des Augustins. The chapel opened on that side of the building. It was large, simple, and very devotional. The lawns and shady alleys of the garden afforded the scholars a delightful playground.

Close by, towering over the enclosure and the house, rose in majestic height the glorious Cathedral. It was there, close to the sanctuary, "Under the shadow of the Beloved," as the Canticle expresses it, that was finally established that foundation of Amiens, which the Sacred Heart still looks upon as its cradle. On the 29th of September, 1804, the Society took possession of its new home, on the feast and under the auspices of St. Michael the Archangel, the conqueror of Satan and the protector of France. The school was rapidly increasing—its tone was serious and earnest. The affection of the children for their teachers had the most powerful effect in stimulating them to excel. Mother Barat's presence amongst them was like a ray of sunshine. She liked to come unexpectedly into the play-ground and to ask the little girls to sing her favourite hymn, and after listening to it with delight, she commented on the beautiful words—"How lovely are Thy tabernacles, O my God!" Even the youngest of the little pupils were impressed with the sweetness of her countenance and the humility of her words.

These young girls belonged to families greatly varying in fortune and social position. It required prudence, tact, and, above all, great charity and kindness, to avoid the difficulties which these disparities might easily have occasioned. But Mother Barat's unaffected distinction of manner on the one hand, and on the other her intense delicacy of feeling, precluded all embarrassment on this account. Modest, simple, and unpretending with everybody, whatever their position might be, she was, by her superior intellect and perfect refinement, on a level with persons of the highest rank. Her humble origin, which she never hesitated on suitable occasions to allude to, often served to place at their ease those of an inferior station. She could talk to the farmers of Picardy of their fields and crops as well as about religion. "That woman knows everything,"

people were wont to say. And now her work was about to extend, and the little home of the Sacred Heart to send forth its colonies to different parts of France. Vocations were multiplying. The singular fervour of the new Institute, the religious spirit of a school whose mistresses united the most earnest piety with singular gifts for teaching, was answering, as the Founder had expected, the urgent and peculiar needs of that period. The house of Amiens could no longer contain the Sisters, and new postulants, who seemed made on purpose for them, to use Father Varin's expression, could not be received.

It was then that a providential opening prepared the way for a second and important foundation. In the town of Grenoble, some thirty-five years before, Philippine Duchesne had been born—one of those women to whom nature gives strength of character, an indomitable will, and a restless activity, which grace converts into the spirit of self-sacrifice, of ardent apostleship, of unbounded zeal. She belonged to a clever and energetic family. The famous statesman, Casimir Perier, was her near relative. Her own father had played a conspicuous part in the early stages of the Revolution on the Liberal side. Like Mother Barat, she had received a superior education, and shared all the studies of her brothers and her cousins, but the ardour with which she studied arose from her settled resolution to embrace the religious life, and to consecrate every talent she possessed to the service of God. She had been brought up at the Convent of the Visitation of Sainte Marie-d'en-Haut, the secluded home on a height above Grenoble, where St. Jane Frances de Chantal had established her daughters more than two hundred years before. And there she insisted on returning as a novice as soon as she could dispose of her own liberty. But before the time came for her vows to be made the Revolution drove her from the cloister, though without changing her determined purpose.

To God she would belong, for the poor she would work. With a few friends worthy of being her companions, she penetrated during the Reign of Terror into crowded prisons, relieved the poor, visited the sick, conveyed poor dying women to her own bed, and brought them a priest. Imitating the charity of the saint of her devotion, the great St. Francis Regis, she assembled at her home a number of intractable boys, whom she had found living almost like wild animals, and, in spite of every difficulty, taught and prepared them for Holy Communion.

Two distinct attractions divided the heart of this servant of God. When a child, she had once heard a Jesuit Father, just arrived from Louisiana, relate the details of his missionary labours, and from that time forward she had felt a burning desire of apostleship. The very sound of the words, *savages*, *missionaries*, *propagation of the faith*, *martyrdom*, made her heart throb with excitement. On the other hand, she pined for her dear Convent of Sainte Marie, which had been converted into a prison during the days of Terror, and afterwards remained a dismal solitude. Not content with mourning over its ruins, she went to the Préfet, M. du Bouchage, and proposed to rent the house.

Four days afterwards, on the 4th of December, Mdlle. Duchesne, assisted by her poor children, took possession of the old house of Sainte Marie-d'en-Haut. Somebody advised her to wait till Easter; but she declared that not for a single hour would she delay her return to the holy home which she had so long been pining for; it was time to show the world how grossly it had lied in asserting that nuns were unwilling victims, and did not love their convents.

Mdlle. Duchesne hastened to invite to Sainte Marie her former Sisters dispersed in all the countries of Europe. Only a few of them came back, and of these few scarcely any remained there. So, after years of vain hope and many severe trials, she found herself with only eight pupils, a

Lay-sister, a young postulant, and two Choir Nuns. Certain as she was of her vocation and her resolution, she began to hesitate a little as to the way in which God willed to lead her. It was then that the Abbé Rivet, the brother of one of her companions, made her acquainted with the Society of the Sacred Heart, and put her into communication with the Fathers of the Faith, who were preaching at Lyons. From that moment she began secretly to pray that it might be granted to her to join the new Society, and when M. l'Abbé Rivet brought his friends, Father Varin and Father Roger, to visit her, she felt that her prayer had been heard. This was a memorable visit; it took place on the 31st of July, the day on which the Church celebrates the feast of St. Ignatius; it was celebrated with great fervour, but neither on that day, nor the following one, nor even at the moment of his departure, did Father Varin speak of anything except the slowness necessary in the accomplishment of the works of God. But this was not in accordance with Mdlle. Duchesne's ideas, and she exclaimed, "But, Father, does not Scripture tell us, in speaking of God, that He advances with the steps of a giant? And if St. Francis Xavier had gone to work in so measured a manner, would he have extended his conquests for Jesus Christ as far as he did?" Father Varin smiled, and that evening, when he was giving Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, he received a distinct intimation of our Lord's will on the subject. "You are right, my child," he said to Mdlle. Duchesne, "there must be no further delay, we must send you Mother Barat, and see what can be done with this house."

Delighted with his promise, the nuns of Grenoble wrote to the Superior of Amiens to express the joy it would give them to become her daughters. Mother Barat answered by recommending them to pray earnestly. "Then," she said, "God will bless you, and you will obtain for me the graces that will enable me to fulfil His will."

"It was agreed with Father Varin that Mother Barat should go to Grenoble at the beginning of the winter. It was a hard trial to her to leave the house of Amiens still in the weakness of its early days, and, moreover, it was no small undertaking at that time for young and inexperienced women to travel many hundred leagues in a stage coach. Mother Barat was entering upon that long course of journeys and constant changes of abode, involving painful separations, which was to be, for more than half a century, the fate of one whose natural inclination and tenderness of heart would have led her to sigh for repose, solitude, and an uninterrupted intercourse with those she loved.

The letters of Father Varin, which reached her at each successive halting-place on the road, cheered her on her way and kept up her spirits.

Leaving Amiens on the 22nd of November, and having made a visit of eight days to Joigny, and remained three or four at Lyons, Mother Barat arrived at last at the convent of Grenoble on the 13th of December.

She was struck at once with the grand aspect of the place. It would indeed be difficult to find a site commanding a more extensive and beautiful view than Sainte Marie-d'en-Haut, and holy associations are enshrined within this circle of natural magnificence. The Convent of Sainte Marie was founded by Madame de Chantal. She had frequently resided there, and more than once St. Francis of Sales had visited it. Even in its ruinous state some beautiful remains of former splendour were still discernible.

Mother Barat had never seen a cloistered convent, and when she was introduced into the interior of the house, through a gloomy corridor, arched and narrow, her heart sank within her, as she afterwards confessed, but it was soon lightened by the appearance of Mother Duchesne, who, in accordance with the religious customs of former days, prostrated herself on the ground before her, and

kissing her feet, recited these words of the Psalmist: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, and that preacheth peace!"*

The day of this meeting was one of great happiness on both sides, of so deep and intense a happiness that Mother Duchesne, in her journal, says that it would be useless to try to describe it. Now she felt the time for silence had arrived; she had nothing to do but to obey, and this consciousness filled her soul with unspeakable thankfulness.

In taking possession of a convent that had received nuns of various orders, and still maintained a great variety of customs, the new Superior anticipated great difficulties. Father Varin thus advises her: "In effecting a reform," he wrote, "there must be more patience than ardour, and more prudence than zeal; we must proceed gently in order to win hearts; the rest comes afterwards and by degrees without noise or disturbance. Beware of a too impatient desire to make everything perfect at once." Guided by this teaching, she looked to the love of Jesus Christ as the only means of bringing about the gradual transformation of the community of Sainte Marie-d'en-Haut.

At Christmas, Bethlehem seemed reproduced in the midst of those mountains and in the dilapidated convent, almost as bare as the stable where Christ found birth. The snow made its way into the rooms: there were three windows and a door missing in the church; the cold was very severe, but Mother Duchesne declares that they did not feel it.

The reign of the Sacred Heart once established in the community, there was no sacrifice they did not accept. At the Superior's request the grating was suppressed, and certain monastic practices given up. The Sisters agreed to have all the same confessor, M. Rivet. The image of the Infant Jesus was placed amongst them, and received their

* Isaias lii. 7.

heartfelt homage, and what Mother Duchesne calls "the first-fruits of their sacrifices." "It was at the feet of Mother Barat," she says, "that we laid them, in order that, by that humble outpouring of our souls into the soul of our new Mother, we might win favour from Him Who is the perfect model of dependence and religious abnegation."

The exercises of the retreat given by Father Roger at the beginning of 1805, raised this spirit of sacrifice to its highest perfection. When, at the close of it, the preacher asked Mother Duchesne to bring to the foot of the crib whatever was nearest to her heart, she replied: "Then, Father, this house is the only thing I can bring; for except Sainte Marie, I do not find that I hold to anything in this world."

It was in order to carry out the amalgamation of the nuns of Sainte Marie and those of the Sacred Heart, that Mother Barat had established herself at Grenoble amongst her new daughters. She gave them daily instructions, with the view of training them for their vocation.

But it was her example that had most effect. Mother Duchesne's delight was to contemplate the servant of God kneeling on the spot occupied formerly, it was said, by Madame de Chantal, and placing herself on the opposite side to unite her prayers with those of her young Superior. Completely waiving her rights in the house, Madame Duchesne was as submissive as a child to Mother Barat, whose only difficulty was to moderate her new daughter's excessive austerities.

Amongst the other novices was a young girl, Jeanne Emilie Giraud, who was always called in the Society "the good Mother Emilie." She was one of those gentle simple souls who could not tell how she had learnt to know Jesus Christ, but could not remember the time when she did not love Him; for it was one of the earliest recollections of her childhood that, passing one day by a convent which had

been demolished during the Revolution, she caught sight of a Crucifix half concealed under rubbish. She took it up in her arms, carried it home, and placed it in her little bed.

The peaceful training of the Sisters was somewhat impeded by storms from without; jealousies arose and ill-natured reports. Madame Duchesne herself, inured to these attacks, could not but admire in her Superior a peace of mind greater than her own. They heard at that time that the military engineers threatened to seize their convent to convert it into a barrack, and whilst this danger was still besetting the house at Grenoble, Mother Barat was obliged to go to Lyons, where negotiations for the opening of one at Bellez were begun and then abandoned. This kept her several months away from her daughters, but she continued to direct them by letter.

It was during her residence at Lyons that the Mother Foundress received the greatest of consolations. His Holiness Pius VII., when returning from Napoleon's coronation, passed through that city in the month of April, 1805. The Holy Father was greeted with heartfelt enthusiasm, and Mother Barat, amongst others, hastened to kneel at his feet. She assisted at his Mass, received Communion from his hand, and obtained an audience of the Vicar of Christ. This was the first time that the Pope had heard of the Institute of the Sacred Heart. Madame Barat lost no time in communicating to Father Varin the words addressed to her by the Sovereign Pontiff, and the blessing she had received for herself and for her community. This letter of hers has not been preserved, but Father Varin's reply plainly shows that this blessing had been special, and that he looked upon it as a most happy omen for the little Society. "I fully share in the consolation you felt in seeing the Holy Father. Those reiterated blessings are a happy augury for the future destiny of those on whom they were bestowed;" and then

he adds, "I have no doubt that before you went into the presence of the Holy Father, you had made interest with Him Whose Vicar he is, and that the Master had spoken to the heart of His servant."

Madame Barat did not return to Grenoble till the 20th of May. Her sojourn at Lyons had been of use to the community of Sainte Marie-d'en-Haut, for she had met there Henriette Girard, who begged for admission into the Society, and was to prove one of its most valuable members. She had intended to be a nun, but one of her brothers, a canon of the Metropolitan Church at Lyons, had misgivings about the Society of the Sacred Heart because of its recent establishment. He so far influenced the postulant that she came to Sainte Marie-d'en-Haut full of prejudices, and determined to examine closely into everything before taking a final step.

The first thing that struck her was the gaiety of the Sisters; it was what astonished her most. On the one hand she heard nothing spoken of at the conferences but penance and the Cross, and on the other, she saw nothing but happy faces about her; this she could not understand, and she then began to suspect the existence of some hidden mystery under this apparent contradiction. One day, she said to one of the first Mothers, "I should very much like to know what is that Cross that we are always hearing of." The answer she received was this: "Our Cross, my dear Sister, consists in not being able to love God as much as we ought and as we desire, in knowing that He is not loved, although He is so loveable, and in not being able to make His creatures love Him."

It was Mother Deshayes who made this beautiful reply. She had left Amiens and followed her dear Superior to Sainte Marie. Father Varin encouraged a spirit of holy gaiety in the daughters and in the Mother. "Do you wish our Lord to be pleased with you—to take delight in you?"

he used to say. "Then always peace, joy, confidence—confidence in joy—*Gaudete, iterum dico, gaudete.*"

When he came to Grenoble in the month of August, what gave him most pleasure was the mirth of the community.

"Tell your little family," he wrote some days afterwards to Mother Barat, "the joy and consolation it has given me to see their happiness."

The pupils of these holy mistresses were educated in the same spirit. One of them wrote in after days: "Peace and joy reigned amongst us. I can testify from my own experience that Sainte Marie was a little earthly paradise." The number of scholars was not at first very considerable, but the seed sown in the hearts of these young girls produced a rich harvest of Christian lives in the world and holy vocations to the cloister.

A young niece of Madame Duchesne, named Euphrosyne Jouve, particularly attracted Mother Barat's notice. She was then a child of about ten years of age; large blue eyes, a broad white forehead, a brilliant complexion, and curling hair, gave her a resemblance to the angels, represented in the pictures of the great masters. Her precocious intellect, wonderful memory, and general aptitude for everything she undertook, inspired her perhaps with rather too high an opinion of herself. But there was such openness of heart, such earnestness, such generosity in the impetuous nature of this gifted child, that it was impossible not to discern in it the germs of future greatness. The Superior liked to have her in her room, and used herself to correct her exercises, for Euphrosyne had already, by her aunt's desire, begun to study Latin; but chiefly she sought to improve her character and to correct her childish faults. So striking were the results of these efforts, that she was wont to pray that a holy future might be in store for this noble-hearted child, if it was God's will she should live.

When the Novitiate of the Sisters at Grenoble was completed, Father Varin, accompanied by Father Roger, came back to Sainte Marie in order to receive their vows. They were made on the 21st of November, feast of our Lady's Presentation. The Father took as the text of his discourse these words of Moses to the people of Israel: "This day shall be for a memorial to you." They proved prophetic, for the Mothers of the Sacred Heart often look back with gratitude to that day as to the dawn of a happy future. Mother Duchesne says in her journal: "Not only were we happy in living under the rule of our dear Mother, but we were also rejoicing to see the work founded, which we had so long been planning and desiring only for the greater glory of God." No one, not even Mother Duchesne herself, could foresee what cause there was for thanksgiving in what had taken place that day, it was so far beyond what was then discernible. They did not and could not know that it was, not merely one additional community which our Lord had given to the Society of the Sacred Heart, but the key to a new world actually hidden in that modest sanctuary. And in the meantime, as if in preparation for the designs of His Providence, God was linking together the hearts of these two Mothers, Madame Barat and Madame Duchesne, by a friendship which survived all the trials of separation and prolonged absence. The ocean and the continents which were to intervene between these servants of God, never could chill or weaken their mutual affection. It was one of those flames that neither time nor space can dim, and of which the Scriptures say that the waters of the sea cannot extinguish them.

CHAPTER IV.

Foundations at Poitiers and Niort.

1805.

A FEW days after she had received the vows of her daughters of Grenoble, Mother Barat left them to go to Amiens, where affairs of great importance required her presence.

The moment had now arrived for establishing on a secure foundation the organization of the Society. Up to that time Father Varin had been its sole director as well as its founder, and we may add that his life was a magnificent exemplification of its spirit. When God selects a man for the accomplishment of some great work of His own, He not only enlightens him with regard to it, but He also endows him with appropriate graces and virtues. Action and prayer, the warlike and the religious spirit, and that apostolic and interior life which were to be united and embodied in the Institute of the Sacred Heart, were all in an equal degree exhibited in the person of Father Varin.

We can often judge of a man by his favourite expressions. "Courage and confidence," was the motto of his public and apostolic life. The feelings of his heart and the ruling spring of his interior life were embodied in those oft repeated words: "How good God is!" They constantly recur in his letters, they are the key-note of his spiritual existence.

The work of the conversion of souls was pursued at that time with extraordinary enthusiasm. Amongst the causes and the evidences of this religious reaction, historians have numbered certain great public events, such as the Concordat, the journey of Pius VII. to Paris, and also the writings of celebrated authors, and the eloquent works of Christian apologists. But scanty notice has been taken of the useful labours of those humble missionaries, who, under the name of Fathers of the Faith, went about amidst the towns and villages repairing the havoc which the Revolution had made, raising the altars it had destroyed, and preaching to the multitude the Gospel truths, which sounded new to their ears. But this indefatigable zeal was about to be paralyzed by the Imperial police. In 1804 a decree, prepared by the Minister Fouché, threatened to disperse the Fathers of the Faith; a masterly memorial drawn up by Father Varin, and presented to the Emperor by Count Portalis, delayed the bursting of the storm. The threatened blow, however, was still hanging over their heads, and in the state of the Society of the Sacred Heart, as it was then constituted, the banishment of its Founder would have brought about utter failure. It was, therefore, urgent to secure to the little Association its own special government, by means of the elements which were ultimately to constitute its existence.

For other reasons also, Mother Barat wished that written rules should bind together the houses of her Society. She had mentioned this wish to Father Varin, who thus replied on the 22nd of September, 1805: "As you speak positively of your desire that I should put into writing certain ideas concerning you and your religious family, I will indeed do what you suggest; I have already thought of it, and a few days ago I was turning it over in my mind. We will speak of it again, and if it is the will of God, you will pray for me and He will help me."

The question of the religious profession of the novices of Sainte Marie, some weeks afterwards, naturally led the Bishop of Grenoble to ask for the text of the Constitutions before admitting the Sisters to pronounce their vows. Mother Barat and Mother Duchesne being thus called upon to produce their rules, laid before him a summary which was to be the basis of the work they were going immediately to undertake. It stated that:

"The end of the Association is the perfection of its members and the salvation of souls.

"The spirit of the Association is detachment from the world and from self, purity of intention for the glory of God, zeal and sweetness with regard to our neighbour, and great obedience to Superiors.

"The means of sanctification are, for the religious, the novitiate and their spiritual exercises; with regard to externs, the education of young girls, the gratuitous instruction of the poorer classes, and retreats for ladies of the world."

With regard to organization and general rules:

"1. The different houses of this Association are to have one Superior General.

"2. Everything is to be in common; the manner of living is to be simple and admit of nothing out of the way. The rule will enjoin no austerities nor fasts beyond those of the Church.

"3. Mental prayer is to be made for an hour in the morning, and half an hour in the afternoon daily, as also spiritual reading and two examens of conscience; the little Office of the Blessed Virgin to be recited every day."

Nothing beyond this was proposed at that time to the Bishop, and he gave this short rule his verbal approbation. The Congregation had, in fact, no other laws. What rule they should adopt, and above all, into whose hands the central authority of the Society was to be placed, had to be decided upon by the General Council at Amiens.

Mother Barat arrived there on the 14th of December, 1805, and was welcomed by the Community of the Oratoire. She had been absent for nearly a year, and during all that time had never received any but the most satisfactory tidings from that dear mother-house of her Society, and on her return everything she saw and heard seemed calculated to gladden her heart. The Superior, Madame Baudemont, was a person of great virtue, who had formerly been a Poor Clare, and who governed her house with admirable regularity, giving much edification and inspiring attachments, founded, perhaps, rather on esteem than affection. Though possessed of a very strong will, she was also somewhat liable in some cases to be much influenced by others. What Father Varin viewed with apprehension was her deficiency in the spirit of humility and love, which so peculiarly distinguished Mother Barat. The natural tendency of her character was to absolutism, and this was increased by the warm support of the Abbé de Saint Estève, who was confessor to the community and the pupils, and lent on every occasion a helping hand to the Superior. He was a man of letters and of a brilliant imagination, a restless genius always on the move. Thanks to the cooperation of this priest, whose zeal and virtue were in high esteem, the Superior of Amiens had, during the absence of Mother Barat, acquired supreme influence in the house, and had prepared the way for her elevation to the first place in the Society.

Mother Barat certainly was not the person to dispute it with her. She had returned to Amiens with the firm hope that she would be relieved from the burthen of Superiorship. From the time of her first election she had never ceased to ask it of Father Varin. Far from seeking notice or striving to put herself forward, her sole desire was to hide herself in obscurity. The only subject connected with herself to which she ever voluntarily alluded was the obscurity of her

birth and the poverty of her parents. She had taken her eldest nephew, Louis, from his native village, and at the age of eight years placed him at the College of the Fathers of the Faith at Amiens; but whilst she fulfilled her promise of giving her sister's children a good education, she took care that no one should be ignorant of their modest origin. The little scholar of those days thus mentions his visits to his holy relative: "When I went to see my aunt, the nuns and the pupils used to make much of me, but, notwithstanding this kind reception, I remember that the first time they took me to the chapel of the Oratoire, I was so confused at my appearance and so embarrassed in my little coat, the cut of which was clumsy in the extreme, that out of false shame I concealed myself in a corner. But my aunt came and took me to a place near the altar, immediately under the eyes of the pupils and the ladies. Certainly her humility must have been satisfied, for my figure and appearance were not calculated to do her honour."

The choice of a Superior General was to be decided by the Council of Mothers. This election was the first question submitted to them.

On the feast of the Chair of St. Peter, 1806, this important act was accomplished. All the professed nuns present on that occasion gave their votes. Those who were absent had forwarded theirs. On summing up it was found that Mother Barat had the majority by one vote only, and it is remarkable that this deciding vote was due to the recent promotion of Sister Maillard to the dignity of a Choir Nun. The timely addition of this humble vote was gladly recognized afterwards as an instance of the secret workings of Providence.

The news of her election was a crushing blow to the new Superior General: she felt overwhelmed by the weight of a burthen which she was now doomed to bear until the end of her days.

And why was the burthen assigned to her? Why did Father Varin and the wisest of his daughters place in such young hands, the hands of a girl of twenty-six, the present and future of their Society. What discoveries had they made in this humble soul to warrant that choice? They had noticed, indeed, as every one who knew her must have done, the deep humility and abnegation of self which made her a docile, we might almost say a passive instrument in the hands of God. But beneath this veil they likewise discerned all the elements of that kind of authority tempered with kindness which is essentially Christian and peculiarly akin to the spirit of the Sacred Heart. A clear and enlightened understanding, a mind stored with varied information, a quick perception of character, and a delicate tact both in dealing with souls and in the management of temporal affairs; a spirit of promptitude and order, of magnanimity and moderation, and above all, common sense, that gift which nothing can replace, not even genius, not even sanctity; for as St. Ignatius says: "Great prudence with less sanctity, is more useful than great sanctity and less prudence." Then in her heart the predominating element of love, ardent love of God, a passionate desire to see Him obeyed and glorified; a sacred sense of duty, and then a love of her neighbour fraught with all the gentleness and sweetness which tend to make the performance of duty easy and agreeable to others. Lastly, strength of character, not merely the strength to act, but a strength still more necessary for a Superior, the courage to suffer. In short, the highest natural gifts enhanced by a magnificent amount of Divine grace, a perfect harmony between the original faculties and the acquired virtues of a soul, disciplined, trained, and sanctified. Such were the elements of Mother Barat's superiority and the justification of the act which placed her at the head of her Society. Overwhelmed as she was by the weight of her new responsibilities, she

uttered no complaints. It seemed to her more becoming and more truly humble to remain silent, than to speak of herself and her own unworthiness. Writing to her dear daughter, Madame Duchesne, she makes scarcely any allusion to her promotion. Just at the end of a letter she says: "My child, much has happened to your Mother during the last few days. I am still struggling to be resigned, and can hardly attempt as yet anything else. Pray for me, and excuse me from saying more."

The next care of the Council was the elaboration of the statutes, but this was soon given up. There again Father Varin had to encounter the influence and opposition of M. de Saint Estève; but satisfied with the choice which had been made of Mother Barat, the Founder did not wish to press matters further. The spirit of the Mother General was a sufficient pledge of the continuance of the same spirit in the Society. For the time being he contented himself with presenting to the Bishop of Amiens a Summary similar to that which the Bishop of Grenoble had approved of, and Monseigneur de Demandolx willingly gave it his sanction.

Immediately after this election Father Varin resigned his title of Superior of the Society, and left Amiens. As its Founder, he of course continued to exercise a considerable influence over the Congregation, which looked upon him as a father, but for the future the direction was to be left to Mother Barat.

Such was his express desire. He did not disguise from her any of the labours and difficulties she would have to encounter, and which he looked forward to as the touchstone and test of her faith and love of God. He even wished her joy of these crosses, which he considered a subject of triumph.

It was indeed the moment for an exhortation to confidence, for at the very time that the Society was being inwardly organized, a light was thrown on its future destiny

which revealed to Mother Barat the extent of the mission it was destined to perform.

Only eight days after she had been named Superior General she received a letter from Mother Duchesne, which informed her that on the feast of the Epiphany the illustrious Abbot of La Trappe, Dom Augustin de Lestrange, had visited Sainte Marie-d'en-Haut. He had just returned from America, where he had founded several houses of his Order. Inspired by the festival of the day, and full of reminiscences of his missionary life, he had spoken so strongly of the miserable condition of the nations that know not Jesus Christ, that Mother Duchesne felt all the ardour that for a long time past had powerfully impelled her towards the work of the missions re-awakening in her heart. The infidel nations, and above all, the savage tribes of America, were ever present to her mind. She wanted to set off at once. It was to ask for that permission that she had written to Mother Barat, who, when she received it, could not contain her joy. In a long, confidential outpouring of her secret feelings, she told Madame Duchesne of her own former desires to evangelize the heathen, and the prayers she had addressed to St. Francis Xavier with that intention; and then she bids her to hope on, to cherish this desire, to labour to deserve this favour, to be more and more faithful to Jesus, and to set no limits to His mercies; and promises at the time of her return to Sainte Marie-d'en-Haut to discuss with her this important subject, "of all, the dearest to her soul."

Madame Duchesne believed that she had attained the object of her wishes, but twelve long years were to elapse before her hope was realized—years of ardent prayers, of anxious desires, full of disappointments and the heart sickness of long delays—but all preparing the future missionary for her great work.

It was doubtless with a merciful intent that, on the

morrow of her election as Superior General, it was given to Mother Barat to discern on the infant stem of her Society the powerful offshoots which were one day to overshadow two worlds.

The Mother General passed the winter and spring of the year 1806 at the house of the Oratoire at Amiens, and then returned to Grenoble, where, however, she only could remain a short time. A few weeks after her arrival there she heard from Father Varin that a foundation was asked for at Poitiers.

Father Lambert, who had preached a mission in that town, had just informed his Superior that some pious persons, mistresses of a large but not prosperous school, had offered to surrender their establishment to the Society, and to place themselves under the rule of the Sacred Heart. Father Varin saw in this an evident indication of the will of God, and urged Mother Barat to accept the offer. Accordingly, on the 10th of July, 1806, accompanied by Mother Girard, she set out to establish this new foundation, although at that time suffering much from a malady of which she had been but imperfectly cured during her stay in Paris in 1804. But hardly had she reached the first stage of her journey than she was instantaneously and entirely cured. She looked on this marvellous recovery as an indication that God approved of her undertaking. Travelling by public conveyances from Lyons to Moulins, from Moulins to Limoges by Montluçon and Guéret, Mother Barat was brought into contact with companions of all creeds and all classes. There was only one thing that astonished her, and that was the indifference of so many men to the Saviour, Who had so prodigiously loved them! These feelings filled her heart during the whole time of her journey and renewed her zeal, especially when, in the houses of some good peasants, she questioned their children and found them in such ignorance of the Catechism that

she could have wished to remain amongst those poor little ones to instruct them in their religion and teach them to love God.

The journey proved slow and tedious. Part of it had to be performed in a waggon into which the nuns had some difficulty to climb and seat themselves on bundles of hay. The waggoners supped at the same table with them. Their fare was bad—their lodging still worse. If it had not been for their firm trust in God's protecting care they would sometimes have felt frightened in the lonely wayside inns in which they had to pass the night.

The happy moments were those when they could enter a church in some village, hear Mass and receive Holy Communion. This happened on the feast of Mother Barat's patroness, St. Mary Magdalen. "I cannot," she exclaims, "leave off thanking God for having granted me such a privilege on that day. I own that I felt greater joy in celebrating that feast in such a quiet spot, far from compliments and bouquets, than if I had spent it in one of our houses."

It was only on the 23rd of July, thirteen days after her departure from Grenoble, that the Foundress made her entrance into Poitiers, in a very poor equipage and amidst torrents of rain, that lasted all day. "It did not much signify," Madame Barat playfully remarks, "for we had no fears of grand preparations having been made for our reception, which would have been in danger of being spoilt." Dripping with rain, wet through, and without any other escort than a poor woman carrying their scanty luggage, the two nuns knocked timidly at the door of that house of the Feuillants, where the Sacred Heart was so soon to open an educational home for the children of the most distinguished families of the province. They were received civilly and kindly by the pious ladies at the head of the school, but Mother Barat knew hardly any-

thing more about them than their names and that they wished to belong to the Sacred Heart. Mdlle. Lydie Chobelet and her two sisters, in the height of the Reign of Terror, had ventured to open a school, where the name of Jesus Christ was publicly taught and adored. They had been despoiled, banished, and imprisoned, and had been within an inch of the scaffold. But they had hardly recovered their liberty, and France some degree of tranquillity, than they resumed their school and their plans. The convent of the Feuillants having been offered for sale, they bought it, and soon collected around them souls, bent upon serving God in the religious life and the education of children. This was one of those rough copies, if we may so speak, of Mother Barat's great work, which we shall often meet with in the course of this narrative.

But the school did not succeed. Mdlle. Lydie, then forty years of age, was the only one of the three sisters who lived in the convent at the time we are speaking of; and out of the little community she had assembled there, only one faithful companion, Mdlle. Joséphine Bigeu, had remained with her.

This lady, by inclination, virtue, and talents seemed made to become one of Madame Barat's spiritual daughters. Like so many of the first Mothers of her Society, she had been highly educated, having studied with a young brother sciences, literature, history, and Latin. When at the age of fourteen, her heart had been entirely converted to God, she began to practice austerities, to give herself to prayer, and to withdraw from all worldly amusements. During the Reign of Terror she too went through a glorious apprenticeship of devotion to good works, carried on in secret and at the greatest peril.

Mother Barat soon perceived that these two holy souls were pining to sacrifice their liberty to God, and that, already trained as they were to religious virtue, they would

easily be imbued with the spirit of her Institute. But it was impossible to begin a novitiate with so few subjects.

Providence provided a remedy for that difficulty. The Heart of Jesus had spoken to the hearts of a group of young girls at Bordeaux: they had learnt the existence of the Society; its spirit had been instilled into them, and several of them were only waiting for permission to join it. They had their desire conveyed to the Mother General, and on the 12th of August she arrived at Bordeaux.

The Fathers of the Faith had been preaching in that town. One of them, Father Enfantin, a powerful orator, who guided many souls in the way of truth and the practices of Christianity, had also influenced some amongst them to aspire to religious perfection. Amongst these were six young girls, who had given themselves to the Lord with all the fervour of southern natures, and had already constituted themselves into a community. In their impatience to live in solitude, they had one day left the town and retired to a vineyard which belonged to one of the new Sisterhood, whose name was Angela. There, with the full faith which knows no doubts and feels no misgivings, they took up their abode in a poor little cottage, and led for three months the austere lives of the virgins of the desert.

But when Mother Barat arrived at Bordeaux they were living under the roof of Mdlle. Vincent's semi-monastic house. That virtuous lady and her companion kept a school for the poor, and devoted themselves to doing good in the expectation that some one would at last teach them to do it in a better and more perfect manner. There the six solitaries followed a rule drawn up by Father Enfantin, which was almost similar to that of the Sacred Heart; so that they belonged to it even before they had heard of its existence.

Mother Barat's first interviews with these her new daughters enabled her to discover at once the leading spirit

amongst them. Elizabeth Maillucheau had been the principal promoter of the pious little association. Her parents lived sometimes at their vineyard of Saint André de Cubzac, and sometimes at Bordeaux, where they possessed a house and wine cellars. Elizabeth was the eldest of the family: her fine qualities and distinguished talents had made her a great favourite with her father. He had given this dear daughter of his an excellent education: she knew Spanish and a little Latin, was a good musician, and played the harp. During the Revolution she had shown that devotion to the Church which seems to have been the mainspring of all these first vocations to the Sacred Heart; but no sooner did she speak of becoming a nun than her parents became alarmed, and retired with their beloved child to their country house of Saint André de Cubzac. But if deprived of the educational advantages of a town, Elizabeth had still her books and her harp to fall back upon. She read St. Theresa's works in Spanish, set her hymns to music, and as she sang them learnt of the Saint to love her Lord. In the meantime, the Fathers of the Faith came to Bordeaux to give a mission, and she obtained leave to attend the Exercises; she was then twenty-nine years of age. The moment which was to decide her vocation had arrived. In order to put it to the proof, Father Enfantin subjected her to hard, humiliating, and even strange trials. It stood every test; and though her parents resisted at first, they were obliged at last to yield. When Madame Barat went to visit them at Saint André de Cubzac, they were comforted by seeing to what a mother they were giving their child.

From her first entrance into religion, Elizabeth took the name of Theresa. If she did not possess the genius of the Saint of Avila, she brought into the Order of the Sacred Heart a love of our Lord somewhat akin to that which St. Theresa had carried with her into the Carmel.

There was at first nothing remarkable about her except

her great simplicity; for the things of this world she showed a want of aptitude which almost amounted to incapacity; and was always more devoted to contemplation than to action. In the midst of the religious community she joined, hers was not like Mother Duchesne's, the part of an apostle, nor that of an eminent teacher, like Mother Bigeu, nor again, that of a valiant woman and indefatigable promoter of good works, like Mother de Charbonnel and Mother Desmarquest; it was Mary's, not Martha's, vocation which attracted her.

Father Enfantin used every day to address instructions to the postulants in Mdlle. Vincent's little chapel. Crowds flocked to hear him, and it was as if a holy epidemic had been raging amongst the young Christian women of Bordeaux. "I could not possibly receive them all," Mother Barat writes; "there were thirty of them wishing to join us; out of this number eight seemed to be marked out for our Institute, comprising the six who had been living together in community, and who were most anxious to be admitted." These eight postulants were sent to Poitiers by successive detachments; Mother Barat went to see them off, and whilst they took the boat on the Gironde, she stood on the banks of the river to give them her blessing in the midst of weeping friends and companions who were grieving at being left behind.

As she was watching their departure, and saw the numerous ships which were lying at anchor in the harbour, her thoughts turned to her daughter at Sainte Marie-d'en-Haut. She wrote to Madame Duchesne that she felt for a moment as if they were both ready to embark in one of those vessels, and to go where their desires were ever calling them. These previsions or presentiments, whichever we may choose to call them, were destined to be realized, for it was from that very port of Bordeaux that, some years afterwards, Mother Duchesne embarked for Louisiana.

It was with great regret that the venerable Archbishop, Mgr. d'Aviau, saw Mother Barat and her daughters depart from his diocese. When she went to take leave of him, he said: "Mind, I only lend you these sheep of my flock. I reckon on your bringing them back to me some day, and making a fold for them here."

After an absence of two months, on the 6th of September Mother Barat came back to Poitiers.

There were eleven subjects in the novitiate, all differing in age, rank, and capabilities, and as various as their dispositions and their histories, had been the kind of attraction which had drawn them to the Sacred Heart. This very dissimilarity was an advantage to the Institute, for these various elements combined, formed an admirable whole.

On the 8th of September, the eleven postulants took the habit, and Father Gloriot, one of the Fathers of the Faith, reminded them that it was the will of God that they should become *saints* and *great saints*.

The Sisters were soon able to appreciate the work of grace which had brought them together. One of the first objects of the Mother General was to bring their souls, so to speak, in contact one with another. During the days of the noviceship, she used to request each Sister in turn to relate at recreation the incidents of her life which had most evinced the goodness of our Divine Lord, and strange and various were the ways which they were found to have been conducted to the true home of their souls.

Towards the end of October a retreat was preached, during which Mother Barat's close union with God was evinced by involuntary and unmistakeable signs. Burning words used to escape her during the conferences, which set the hearts of her daughters on fire. They caught something of her spirit, and were so absorbed by devotion that even to take nourishment was an effort. They only hungered for the Bread of Life. Poor Marie, an old servant of Mdlle.

Chobelet, used to sigh as her dishes returned to her nearly untouched, and to say: "Oh, dear me! how these good Mothers love God! But they don't eat!"

After this retreat, which had been preached by two of the Fathers of the Faith, some very worthy priests took charge of the little community. Above all, M. de Beauregard, a man of great virtue and intelligence, who had been banished to Cayenne during the Revolution. But the chief instrument in this great work for souls was still Mother Barat. It was her constant effort to inculcate on her novices the spirit of self-renunciation. Their life was one of hard work. Everything had to be arranged, altered, and set to rights in the old abbey. The beds, the furniture, even stoves, had to be carried by the Sisters, and the Superior took upon herself the weightiest tasks.

Besides hard work, the community had to undergo severe privations; they had neither means, dowries, nor even many pupils, only five at first, so that they were reduced to desperate straits. Then old Marie's devices proved an unfailing resource. When she saw the Mother Treasurer at her wit's end, she used to say: "I will see to the dinner;" and then some vegetables out of the garden, and the sale of waste paper, or any other odds and ends, provided means for the Sisters' humble meal.

Oppressed as Mother Barat was with the burthen of temporal affairs, which were by no means in a prosperous state, she bore it with a quiet courage which never forsook her. She had to feed all her children, and often there was not a farthing in the house. But God always provided, and as they had no anxiety, they never really suffered.

Then a period of contradiction followed. Certain zealous persons began to fear that the new establishment would ruin other institutions in the town. "Who could have thought," Mother Barat observes, "that a few women occupied in sweeping, sewing, teaching the elements of

grammar, and spelling over the Latin of their Office, could have inspired so much alarm?"

But Mother Barat was not satisfied with these exterior struggles against contradiction, penury, and fatigue. She imposed on nature yet harder inflictions, and waged a merciless war against self-love in every shape; the whole period of this novitiate being directed to that end. She did not let a day pass without exercising her daughters in the renouncement of their own will, and subjecting them to practices distasteful to natural inclinations. One was sent to help the gardener, another to relieve from her duties Madeleine, a child of twelve years old, who had to look after the cows in the paddock. "Our Mother used to give us these orders," a Sister relates, "just as naturally as if we had never done anything else in our lives." Some of the novices concluded that they were not considered fit for higher things, and had been received simply as Lay-sisters, and they did not think of asking a question on that subject.

Mother Barat persecuted self-will even into its last stronghold, a taste for prayer and religious exercises. If a Sister had a predominant attraction for prayer, she sent her, much against her inclination, to scrub, to wax the floor, or to take care of the animals.

During the long visits of Sister Theresa to the Blessed Sacrament, she used to go into the chapel, and desire this ardent worshipper of our Lord to go into the garden to cut grass for the cows. Off she went, laboured with ardour, and then came back in a little while to say, "Mother, I have gathered a good load of grass, may I return to the chapel?" "No, you must cut double the quantity." "Very well," she would reply, and when that task was done another was assigned to her. Sister Theresa was deprived of her dear visit, but she had offered to her Divine Spouse the best of prayers, and that is, sacrifice.

Perfect harmony reigned among the Sisters. Nothing

could equal the union and the peace which, under the direction of their Mother, existed among them; but at the same time a complete absence of anything inordinate and of any undue familiarity. Full of delicate attentions for one another, they evinced their mutual charity by a complete forgetfulness of self, and on every occasion made others their chief object. Mother Barat was most absolute in insisting on this point of charity, and her foresight on the subject was almost prophetic. It was in her opinion a question of life or death for the Sacred Heart.

In the meantime the school did not fill rapidly, and the Superior used to tell her daughters that they must become more perfect if they wanted our Lord to send them a greater number of children. To make up for this delay, they opened a poor school at the end of 1807. This had long been their desire. "For," wrote Mother Barat, "it was painful to us not to set on foot this good work, which is one of the ends of our Institute, and part of the charge which our Lord has committed to us."

Thus went by the autumn of 1806 and the first months of 1807. It was during this time that the battles of Jéna and of Eylau were fought. In perusing these records, we can scarcely realize that they relate to the most sanguinary period of the wars of the Empire. It seems as if, in those days of terrible warfare, when joy was banished from so many homes and so many families, God had allowed peace, charity, and happiness to take refuge under the roof of a few pious women who, amidst the ruins of an old cloister, found their wealth in Him alone.

In the spring of 1807, Mother Barat was obliged for a time to leave her daughters, who took the separation terribly to heart. She owns to having found it herself very difficult to overcome natural sorrow on this occasion, and says that it required all the assistance of Divine grace to enable her to do so. On the 21st of April she left Poitiers

for Paris, where the affairs of the Society required her presence. On her arrival, she was apprised of the decree, signed in the Camp of Osterode by Napoleon I., on the 10th of March, 1807, by which her Institute was formally approved for the whole of the French Empire.

She returned to Poitiers on the evening of the 15th of May, her reception was an ovation.

The period of the novitiate was drawing to a close. Mother Barat declared that she had no other subjects who equalled these Sisters. Of one of them, Theresa Maillucheau, her Superior could write, "She treads in the footsteps of St. Theresa." And of Joséphine Bigeu, "I look upon her as a Saint." These two Sisters were the first admitted to make their vows. The ceremony was performed in the spring of 1807. In the month of November, the other novices, with Mdlle. Chobelet at their head, went into retreat to prepare for their profession.

It was in the midst of these days of prayer that the Mother General received an alarming letter from Father Varin. The Society of the Fathers of the Faith was dispersed. They were suspected of Royalism, and the Emperor Napoleon issued a decree commanding them all to return to their respective dioceses, on pain of being transported to Cayenne. Mother Barat could not help feeling, in addition to the deep grief which this event caused her, the apprehension that a similar fate might be awaiting her own Congregation. Six of her daughters were about to pronounce their vows, and justice required that that they should at once be informed of what had happened before they engaged themselves in a Society which was perhaps on the brink of ruin. Not one of them hesitated; they all declared that their only regret was not to be allowed to make at once their perpetual vows.

The Novitiate of Poitiers may be considered as the starting-point in the history of Mother Barat, and the

decisive epoch in the development of her Order. Now more than ever she had to act on her own responsibility. Father Varin was going away. He had wished to remain in Paris in order to correspond more easily with his scattered priests, but this the Emperor would not permit. The holy missioner was ordered to Besançon. He took up his abode at the chateau of his sister, near that town, and devoted himself to a life of prayer and recollection. This retirement gave him time to elaborate the Constitutions of the Society of the Sacred Heart. It was perhaps for that purpose that God had thus ordained the course of events.

From this time forward we find Mother Barat's work extending in various directions, and her foundations rapidly succeeding one another. From Amiens a little colony went to a little village called Cuignières, where a house had been offered to them for the establishment of a school for girls. The proposal was gladly accepted, for in the event of a critical moment, the poverty and isolation of this retired spot were likely to prove a protection. Soon afterwards, the old Abbey of Dooresele, in Ghent, was placed at the disposal of the Sacred Heart for a similar purpose by the venerable Bishop of that city. From Poitiers also, in the year 1808, a house was founded at Niort. The Superior of this new establishment was Mother Geoffroy, who joined the Sacred Heart at the advanced age of forty-seven. She had been led in a wonderful way into the Society, where the fame of her good works had preceded her. Having first desired to be a Carmelite, and being assured that this was not her vocation, she begged her director, a holy priest, who had been a Jesuit, to make known to her the will of God. His answer was a prophecy: "Patience," he said, "patience; God intends you to enter a Society which will take its rise in Germany." "And when will this be, Father?" "All I can tell you is, that the person who will establish this Society in France is at this moment still playing with her

dolls." This took place in 1787; Mdlle. Geoffroy was then twenty-six years of age, and little Sophie Barat was only eight years old.

One day, just before the decree which ordered all the churches to be closed, three of her friends were standing with her on the steps of the Cathedral of Poitiers. She said to them, "They are suppressing religious houses; what would you say to our founding one?" "By all means," they replied; "providing you will be our Superior." She accepted without hesitation. They soon had a large house, a priest in disguise came to say Mass for them, people resorted to it from every side.

With an ardent and saintly rashness, they harboured priests and nuns, instructed children, had the last sacraments administered to the dying. Under their roof the Blessed Sacrament was adored day and night, even during the worst days of persecution. During the first days of returning tranquillity, she founded two important works, La Providence and La Grande Maison. She was driven out of them by persons quite as anxious as herself to do good, but who chose to do it in their own way. After many vicissitudes, during which the thought of the Sacred Heart, which had been the great devotion of her life, was ever present to her mind, she heard the name, and at once understood the spirit of the new Institute, and lost no time in petitioning to be admitted into it. She entered the novitiate in 1807. The Founder and Superior of three houses was set to teach a class of poor little children, joyfully gave herself to the work, and pronounced her vows on the feast of the Sacred Heart in 1808. It was this holy religious who was placed at the head of the new establishment at Niort, which was opened that year on the festival of St. Peter and St. Paul. Madame Emilie Giraud was sent there to assist in the boarding-school. For this young nun, the change from Sainte Marie-d'en-Haut, with its beautiful

convent, its views, and its sunshine, to a house like that of Niort, which looked more like a prison than a monastery, and where poverty reigned not only in a religious, but in a very painful sense—the separation from her beloved Superior, Mother Duchesne, and the want of companionship with persons of her own age—was an amount of trial which it required all Mother Barat's exquisite tenderness and wisdom to induce her to accept, not only with resignation, but with joy. She wrote her a series of letters, breathing the purest and strongest religious spirit, and by a mixture of earnest exhortation, of playful reproof, of maternal solicitude, and gentle severity, corrected, urged forward, and advanced in spirituality the loving, humble, devoted girl, whose only fault was a great proneness to indulge in overweening attachments.

Instructed by Mother Barat, guided by her wonderful good sense, and stimulated by the example of one who united, like the Mother General, a wonderful power of loving with an entire detachment from any mere natural clinging to human affections, she gradually learnt the blessed lesson of self-sacrifice in its most refined and essential point, and became a model of generosity. At one time she was in danger of losing herself in the heights of a too mystical devotion, but Mother Geoffroy, in the true spirit of her Order and her own homely way, would check this tendency, and say, "Come, my child, do not spin your thread too fine. It will break, and make bad linen. Better use more solid materials, and weave good household cloth."

Meanwhile the house at Niort was in danger of failing from want of pupils, and matters came to such an extremity that Mother Barat came there in 1809 for the purpose of closing the house. Mother Geoffroy made only one request: that she would pray for half an hour before the Blessed Sacrament before taking a final resolution. Mother Barat

went at once into the chapel, and prayed there long and earnestly. When she left it, her opinion was changed. She was inspired with the conviction that the foundation of Niort was to be maintained, and the sequel proved that she had rightly decided. The community courageously embraced the greatest hardships, like soldiers determined to defend a town. They sought nothing but the reign of God and His justice, and before long He gave the promised increase. The boarding-school began to prosper. This humble little foundation had followed the habitual course of works dear to the Sacred Heart. The house of Niort was the sixth established by the Society, and more than six years were to elapse before another was opened. Critical years they proved, during which threats from without and troubles from within checked the growth of the Society of the Sacred Heart, and obliged it to remain concealed from public notice. Until the fall of the Empire, all that can be said about it was that it barely continued to exist.

God, in His goodness, ordained this check to its extension, just as He sends a hard winter after a fruitful season, to give time to the soil to recruit its energies. Neither the Foundress' soul nor her work were losers by this delay. Her own progress in sanctity, the increase of her authority as Mother General, the success of her Society, and, above all, the creation of its Constitutions, were the ultimate fruits of those years of trial.

CHAPTER V.

Visits to the houses of the Society.

1808.

At the beginning of July, 1808, the Mother General set out for Paris, where she stopped for a short time on her way to Amiens. She was surprised at the changes she found in that house. The dress was altered, the rule modified in various ways of which she had never been informed, and the education had lost that spirit of simplicity which she had been so anxious to establish in the schools of the Sacred Heart.

The author of these innovations was the Abbé de Saint Estève, who was acquiring an absolute and continually increasing influence both over the nuns and the children, Mother Baudemont, especially, was completely under his sway. The Mother General, on the other hand, had left the house of Amiens so soon after its foundation, and had been absent so long, that she was in a great measure forgotten by the Sisters, and even to many of them was quite a stranger. She soon perceived that the Superiority had entirely passed into Mother Baudemont's hands, who left to her only the title and the exterior honours of her position. Under these circumstances the Mother General had to choose between two lines of conduct. Her friends advised her to act with firmness. That was one alternative, but it did not seem to Mother Barat either necessary or prudent. The Fathers of the Society of the Sacred Heart

were in exile, her own was even then threatened, and only existing under cover of its obscurity. Was this a time to convulse, and possibly entirely to break it up, by a public act of authority? The other alternative was that of expectancy, prayer, long-suffering, and a determination to obtain nothing except from grace and love; it was the one most in accordance with the character and spirit of Mother Barat, and with the inspirations she received from the Holy Spirit. Concealing her sorrow, she accepted some of these changes, not choosing to run the risk of a conflict with persons such as she then had to deal with, and the rest she left in God's hands.

It was necessary, however, to maintain a spirit of unity in the Society, and with that view the Mother General travelled about for three years, visiting all the houses of the Order. In September, 1808, she arrived at Grenoble, and found Madame Duchesne plunged in good works, which, however, could not beguile her ardent soul from its absorbing desire, the foreign missions. Father Varin had given it his decided approval, and during a visit he made to Sainte Marie-d'en-Haut she had obtained from him a special blessing with that object, and the promise that she should be one of the first band of missionaries sent out by the Sacred Heart. Mother Barat had entered with eagerness into the vocation of her spiritual daughter, and had never ceased to encourage it. But this was not enough for Madame Duchesne, who would fain have embarked at once, but the hour had not yet come, her soul was not yet matured for the work it was training for. During long years it was the Superior's difficult aim to prepare, to discipline, and to moderate this ardent character and impetuous spirit.

At the end of October the Mother General returned to Amiens, where fresh trials awaited her. An important arrangement had been concluded, without her knowledge,

between the Bishop of the diocese, Madame Baudemont, the local Superior, and M. de Saint Estève, the Spiritual Director of the house of the Sacred Heart. An orphanage, and some of the Sisters of Notre Dame, whose Foundress and community had been banished from the town on account of their refusal to modify their constitutions according to M. de Saint Estève's fancy, were placed under the direction of the Society of the Sacred Heart. The government of this work, not altogether a satisfactory one, was assigned to Madame Prevost, a young novice of great merits, who was to become one of the corner-stones of her Institute, and for half a century one of Mother Barat's most valued assistants. It was stipulated that as soon as the establishment in question could be supplied with mistresses, she should return to the house of the Oratoire. Mother Baudemont signed the treaty, assuming the title of "Superior of the Ladies of Christian Doctrine." M. de Saint Estève was spoken of as the Founder, and the name of Mother Barat not even mentioned. She was evidently completely set aside. Still she persevered in her system of humble resignation, and took no measures to assert her position.

It was about this time she heard that her father was at the point of death. Mother Barat was deeply attached to her family, and especially to her parents. It was seldom that she went from Paris to Grenoble, without managing to pass through Joigny, and often on those occasions she took with her the most high-born and wealthy of her daughters; and when on arriving at the Rue du Puits-Chardon, she surprised her father in his working dress at home or returning from the fields with his basket on his back, it gratified both her humility and her tenderness to throw herself into his arms, and present him to her companions. In her letters to Madame Dusaussoy, her sister, she never omits to commend to her watchful care

their old and dear father. She expresses anxiety about his aged frame, bent by excessive toil, and still more about his soul, which she wanted to draw nearer to God and Heaven.

Vainly did Mother Barat seek to prolong the days of him who was so dear to her. She was soon to lose her father. Summoned to his bedside in June, she found him very ill, but had not the consolation of closing his eyes, for urgent necessity called her elsewhere. No sooner, however, had she left Joigny, than the news reached her of his decease. Cheered and strengthened by his holy daughter's last farewell, Jacques Barat died a happy death on the 25th of June, 1809, and was gathered to his forefathers, faithful Christians like himself.

After visiting the houses of Poitiers and Niort, the Mother General went to Sainte Marie-d'en-Haut, and remained there a year. She found the poor schools, Mother Duchesne's favourite work, overflowing with children, and the boarding-school training a number of young girls in the love and fear of God. A religious vocation was dawning in the souls of many of them. When at his passage through Grenoble, the aged Pontiff, Pius VII., had blessed the pupils of Sainte Marie, it was noticed that his trembling hand had rested with a sort of persistency on the heads of some of these children. All those he had thus distinguished became nuns; nine of them entered the Society of the Sacred Heart, two the Order of the Visitation, and one, Olympe de Montfort, died at the age of fourteen, when she was already aspiring to the same happiness.

Of all these young girls, none gave such promise of extraordinary sanctity as Euphrosyne Jouve, Mother Duchesne's niece. She had taken St. Aloysius Gonzaga for her model, and was daily advancing in likeness to the youthful Saint, whom she was to resemble in her holy life and early death.

Mother Duchesne again renewed at that time her pressing solicitation for immediate action with regard to the foreign missions. Her Superior's answer can be summed up in three words. "The works of God are accomplished in a slow and hidden manner. Wait till the hour appointed, without disquietude or fear."

After spending a short time in Paris, for the purpose of making a retreat under the guidance of M. Montaigne, a holy Sulpician priest, whom she used to call the grandfather of her Society, Mother Barat went, in January, 1811, to Cuignières, the only house she had not yet visited. There she found six Sisters living contentedly in this solitary habitation, which was intended as a place of retreat for the nuns in case of persecution. There they had suffered from cold, for the house had been dismantled in 1793, and never repaired; hunger, for they had often not bread enough to eat; discomforts of all sorts; straw was their only bed, and what was worse, for some time a nearly total privation of Mass and Communion. To these trials were added the hostility, or at best, the indifference of their neighbours. Such was the account they had to give to Mother Barat of the early days of the foundation, but they had to relate also many wonderful interventions of Providence in their behalf. And above all, the blessing vouchsafed to them in the possession of the Blessed Sacrament in their poor little chapel. The Abbé Lamarche, one of those confessors of the faith who had gone through a long ordeal of persecution, and devoted himself to the most humble and laborious apostolate, came to Cuignières every fortnight to hear confessions and celebrate Mass; and at last, attracted by the Sacred Heart, fixed his abode in that place. The poverty of the little Bethlehem, the sanctity of Mother Desmarquest, its Superior, the piety and fervour of the Sisters, delighted Mother Barat, who had long yearned for the blessedness of an obscure retreat. "We had only one fire and one candle

for us all," she said; "these were the really good old times." She left, promising to return, but before her departure gave away to her daughters everything she had brought with her, in order to go away herself as poor as she had found them.

After leaving Cuignières, Mother Barat made but a short stay at Ghent, and went on to Amiens, where she had to deal with many a thorny question. She arrived there in May, 1811. This had always been in many ways the first house of the Society. Thanks to the Mother General's circumspection, that fervent community had been kept in ignorance of her painful position. The novitiate was flourishing, and the boarding-school had acquired, by daily contact with the postulants, an extraordinary degree of piety. So far all was good; but contempt for authority in a religious house inevitably leads to the loss of its peculiar spirit. This soon became evident on an important occasion. Father Varin, together with the Mother General, had been for some time occupied in framing Constitutions for the Society. He had associated with himself some of his wisest friends. The Abbé de Saint Estève's cooperation had also been accepted, but he was one of those characters which cannot act in conjunction with others. He assumed it to be his own business, and undertook the work with much zeal, but an utter unconsciousness of the object and spirit of the Society of the Sacred Heart. From a variety of different elements he framed constitutions full of praiseworthy enactments, but with no peculiar character of their own. As regarded the divine and temporal ends of the Institute, he made very little account of the Devotion to the Sacred Heart. Even the name of It as that of the Order did not enter into his scheme.

Mother Barat's conduct at this juncture exhibited a most remarkable combination of prudence, dependence on God, and ardent zeal. She saw no object in remaining at

Amiens in order to discuss, and without any prospect of success, a subject which of all others would not bear discussion. She was waiting for an inspiration from the Spirit of Light. Her words on that point are so beautiful that we must transcribe them: "The fruits of an exact fidelity to the Spirit of our Lord are immeasurable. I have but one regret in the world, and that is, not to have been always faithful to it. Oh, if I had to live over again, I would listen only to the Holy Spirit, and act simply by His inspirations." Meanwhile she made herself an apostle of the Sacred Heart. She went from house to house, striving to enkindle the love which alone could secure to the Society the name which was its badge. With this view she travelled from town to town, praying, struggling, and suffering. Weak in health, scarcely able sometimes to drag herself along, but strong and bold of heart, she began her journey at the beginning of July.

Her first visit was to Poitiers. Then she went to Niort, and spent the autumn and winter of 1812 at Grenoble. It was the place of her repose. So sure was she of the fidelity of her daughters in all these houses, and so anxious to be assisted by the judgment of such holy souls as Mothers Grosier, de Charbonnel, Geoffroy, Giraud, and Duchesne, that she thought it best to communicate to them the plan of the new Constitutions. She explained them with perfect candour, and did not give any idea of her own opinion on the subject. But from all she had the same answer. The Sisters all felt that the Sacred Heart did not, as it were, exist in them, nor the sweet and earnest spirit which had been the chief attraction of their vocation.

In the meantime the Abbé de Saint Estève was thrown into prison by the Imperial Government. During his confinement the statutes which he had drawn up were sent to all the houses of the Society, and everything remained at a standstill. New foundations asked for in France and other

countries had to be declined or delayed on account of the suspicions of the Government on the one hand and internal dissensions on the other. Now, however, that the Mother General had ascertained that the regulations of Amiens were almost universally disapproved, she thought it time to oppose to them the genuine Rules of the Society of the Sacred Heart, in conjunction with the Founder and under the guidance of God. She left Grenoble with Mother Deshayes on the 25th of September, 1813, in order to visit Father Varin in his place of exile. This journey was performed during one of the saddest epochs of the Imperial reign. The broken and scattered remnants of Napoleon's Russian army were re-entering France. On the roads and in the fields the travellers beheld nothing but troops of unfortunate soldiers, worn out, half frozen, and more like ghosts than living beings. The town of Besançon was swarming with them; it was on the road to the Chateau de Chevroz, and the servant of God could not help weeping as she passed through its streets on her way to the manorial residence where Father Varin had spent five years in exile. In this home of the olden times, the two servants of God framed the statutes which during his long seclusion he had meditated in prayer and silence.

Mother Barat left Besançon at the beginning of November, made her retreat in Paris, and then went on to Amiens, where she arrived at the beginning of 1814. After an absence of three years, she was able to say of this house, "I am thoroughly satisfied." And some months afterwards, "Everything goes on perfectly well." There had been no relaxation in the love of our Lord even in the midst of the crisis.

Mother Barat at that time entertained somes hopes that the concessions charity had led her to make to the Abbé de Saint Estève would have led to an adjustment of their differences, but all her efforts were about to fail owing to

unforeseen events which brought about the second phase of the crisis of Amiens.

The Empire had fallen, its ruin recalled from exile the Fathers of the Faith, and opened likewise the doors of M. de Saint Estève's prison. He had fallen in the estimation of the Bishop of Amiens, but his captivity had heightened his popularity, and having obtained from the new Government the post of secretary to Monseigneur de Pressigny, Ambassador from the King of France to the Holy See, he started for Rome on the 7th of July, 1814.

A month later, on the 7th of August, the Pope published a Bull re-establishing the Society of Jesus. Father Varin immediately joined it with a great number of the Fathers of the Faith. He began his novitiate at Paris, and entirely engrossed by this his own soul's important concern, he waited for his Superior's orders before he resumed the work of framing Constitutions for the Institute of the Sacred Heart. M. de Saint Estève was left, in consequence, master of the field, and no sooner had he arrived in Rome, than he accordingly announced his intention of obtaining from the Holy Father the approval of the Constitutions drawn up by himself.

Before the end of three weeks, he wrote in a way which indicated that he was about to carry everything before him The Mother General was astonished and alarmed. She sent to him a humble, sensible, and moderate letter of remonstrance, but the time was past for such efforts at conciliation. M. de Saint Estève addressed, in November, 1814, to Father de Clorivière, the venerable Superior of the French Jesuits, a letter in which he openly accused Father Varin of inertness, and Mother Barat of incapacity. He had already written to her, that it was time to put a stop to the lamentable instability which gave people occasion to say that, "those religious ladies had either a bad Superior, or received very bad advice," which insult she secretly rejoiced

at. "There was at any rate one person," she told Mother Duchesne, "who treated her as she deserved." The zealous Abbé stated that to him alone was committed the organization of the Society, the necessary measures for its approbation, and also the foundation of several houses in Rome, Italy, Poland, and even Russia. "This being so," he concluded, "it is absolutely necessary that M. Varin should not interfere. All he has to do is to tell those ladies to remit all power into my hands, otherwise there will be a schism. The Holy Father and our friends will only recognize the community here in Rome, and one word clearly uttered by M. Varin will be enough to determine the nuns in France. He had better take care, then, how he compromises himself with the Holy Father, the Cardinals, and the Court of France, and his Excellency the Minister Plenipotentiary, for they are all aware that he alone will be the cause of the schism, if there be one." Father de Clorivière had been a naval officer under Louis XV. In the cause of the Church he had endured imprisonment for five years in the Temple. He was not a man to be frightened or dismayed. He at once discerned the state of the case, and his only reply to this communication was to order Father Varin to go on working at the Constitutions, and at the same time desired him to resume the direction of his spiritual daughter, then, with his trembling hand, he wrote himself four words which told the servant of God what was the line of conduct she was to follow: "*Pray, suffer, wait, hope.*"

In the midst of these cares and anxieties a heavy cross was awaiting the Mother General. Since the unfortunate Council of Paris of 1811, and especially since the violence exercised by Napoleon against the Bishop and Church of Ghent, France had been hated by the Catholics of Belgium, and her clergy suspected of Gallicanism. The Superior of Dooresele, Mother de Peñaranda, a native of that country, influenced by her compatriots, was inclined to share their

prejudices. M. de Saint Estève's statutes, those strange constitutions, from which the spirit of St. Ignatius and of the Sacred Heart had been banished, were said to be a fresh proof of French Gallicanism. In vain had Father Varin gone to Ghent as soon as he was at liberty, to try and set the matter right. His announcement that the Society was about openly to take the name of the Sacred Heart was indeed received with enthusiasm, but otherwise his visit was unsuccessful. Mother Barat's letters to the community were equally fruitless. The Mother General felt she had no power. "I respect your motives," she wrote to Mother de Peñaranda, "but remember that the branch, when separated from the trunk, cannot take root, and withers away." The rupture was consummated. By episcopal decree Dooresele separated itself from the Society established in France. Mother de Peñaranda was maintained in her position as Superior of the Belgian nuns. The French subjects, after some hesitation, for they were very much attached to the Superior, had the courage to leave Dooresele, and on the 21st of December those six Sisters, and a little niece of Mother Barat's, Sophie Dusaussoy, arrived at Amiens. The Mother General clasped them in her arms, and then wept in silence, unable to utter a word.

On the following morning the Mother General was very ill. Her will had accepted the trial, but the struggle had exceeded her bodily strength. An attack of gastric fever ensued, and during one-and-twenty days she was in imminent danger. Father Barat, then at Bordeaux, was informed of her precarious state. With the strange mixture of austerity and tenderness which belonged to his character, he desired that in case his sister's illness proved fatal, no other tidings should be forwarded to him than a blank sheet of paper with a black seal. He did not feel courage to read the news of her death.

When Father Varin heard of this new trial it grieved him, but it did not make him despair. On the contrary, on the 13th of January, 1815, he wrote to Madame Barat to congratulate her on being thus laid on a bed of sickness. For sufferings of every sort, he said, are the appropriate and proper portion of those who devote themselves to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Mother Barat recovered, but by slow degrees. As soon as she had regained a little strength she wished to see the community, and found to her sorrow that their minds had undergone a change. Letters from M. de Sainte Estève had been again received and circulated. He had just opened at Rome a home called the Convent of St. Denis, which was to be the mother-house of the Society. A Roman journal, the *Diario*, gave a pompous account of its installation. The Founder triumphed: his house was the only one recognized by the Pope; no approval given to any rules but his own; and no one but himself acknowledged as the director and organizer of the whole Order. Father Varin was entirely set aside; and as to Mother Barat, he had already provided for her deposition during the following year, by limiting to ten years the exercise of the functions of Superior General.

It is easy to imagine the confusion caused by these letters. There was an end to both exterior and interior peace. Parties were being formed, and hearts estranged from the Society. The Mother General never lost her serenity of soul. They still show at Amiens a little gallery near the room she used to occupy, and on the wall a picture of our Lord Jesus Christ fastened to the Cross by His executioners. There the Mother Foundress, during whole hours, was wont to meditate on this scene of the crucifixion, until she had imprinted each of its stigma upon her heart. Even long afterwards, she never could go into that tribune without emotion. "I suffered much there," she used to say,

"but then I also loved much." It was but by slow degrees she recovered her strength. When it was fine, one of the Lay-sisters drove her in a wheel-chair around the garden. Madeleine Raison was one of those artless souls that love God with a simple but courageous devotion. Driven from a Benedictine convent by the Revolution, she left it with her Abbess, Madame de Thémines, whom she nursed and consoled in her old age, and whose eyes she closed. Afterwards, in union with some pious persons as devoted to good works as herself, she harboured and tended persecuted priests, exposing her life in the simple and heroic manner in which she always acted. Mother Barat delighted in conversing with this humble Sister.

There was little chance of her cure being perfected at Amiens in the midst of perpetual agitations. The doctor declared that a residence in the country was essential to her recovery. She chose Cuignières, and began her journey on the 21st of July, eve of the feast of St. Magdalen.

There, under the guidance of Mothers Desmarquest and Deshayes, all hearts were united and equally devoted to her. She was welcomed with delight, and a little feast got up on St. Sophia's day in her honour. The festivities consisted only of a throne of foliage, bouquets of corn-flowers, heartfelt and kindly expressions of affection. From time to time they indulged in rural excursions, the Mother General on a donkey, accompanied by the pupils, who sung to her as she went along. They rested in the woods, and ate their noon-day meal enlivened by her amusing and pious conversation. Sometimes they stopped to talk to the villagers. Simple things, pious souls, true hearts, the beautiful works of nature and of grace, always possessed the power of making Mother Barat forget her sufferings.

But the greatest of the benefits her stay at Cuignières afforded her was the encouragement she received from the saintly Abbé de Lamarche. During thirty years he had

been intimately persuaded that France was to be indebted to the Sacred Heart of Jesus for a revival of religion, and to bring about this miracle he believed it necessary that there should be a special Society bearing that sacred title.

Strengthened by these considerations, the Mother General patiently awaited a reply which she had solicited from Rome. More than eight months before she had written to Padre Panizzoni, then Provincial of the Italian Jesuits, to acquaint him with all the particulars of her past conduct, and to ask his advice with regard to the future. Padre Panizzoni had resigned his post, and an unknown secretary wrote in his name. We give an abstract of his letter to Madame Barat:

"An Institute was now constituted, recognized, and approved by the Sovereign Pontiff, and this Institute was that of M. de Saint Estève. This priest, who during ten years had directed the Society of which he was considered the sole founder, had now also become its only Superior. Neither Madame Barat nor her accomplices (this was the term used in the letter) could withdraw from his jurisdiction without incurring the excommunication expressly fulminated by the Council of Trent. The house at Rome was the only one authorized, and to it henceforth would be attached those of France. Moreover, in case of any one of them refusing to submit, the Pope had declared that it should be suppressed in order to avoid the scandal of a division. Nothing then remained for them but to submit to this verdict. To facilitate it the act of adhesion was to be addressed to the writer of this said letter, who pledged himself to obtain a favourable reply from the Superior of the house of Rome: the glory of God, the advantage of peace, the honour of the Church, even faith and salvation, were possible only at this price."

This letter was a death-warrant.

We have given it at full length, in order to show how faith, humility, and trust in God, even when, humanly speaking, all seems hopeless, is gloriously rewarded in the case of His faithful servants.

The friends of the Society held council amongst themselves respecting this communication, and their unanimous opinion was, that there was nothing else to do but to submit. On the 15th of September, 1815, Father Varin wrote to Madame Barat: "I have been speaking with M. Montaigne of you, your communities, and your sad position. I need not tell you the interest he and I take in you; I do not think, after our Lord, the best of all your friends, you could find two others more devoted to you, more ready to feel for your sorrows, and to soften them as far as we can do so. M. Montaigne advises you to return to Amiens, and to tell your daughters that you offer no opposition to their adhesion to the Institute of M. de Saint Estève." He gives as the reason for this advice, the avoidance of a publicity which could not be without scandal, the sole thought of God and His good pleasure, and of following only His Spirit. "You understand, my dear Sister, how much it costs me, to drive in myself, the nails that attach you to the Cross. But courage! When we act in accordance with the Heart of our Lord, we can bear everything."

Madame Barat showed herself on this occasion, as she always did, a true Christian; she began by submitting; if Rome had indeed spoken, the question was decided, and the Society of the Sacred Heart, the heir of so many promises, and the object of so many hopes, must be unhesitatingly sacrificed: but was it really God's will to bring to nought the work of His right hand? She could not bring herself to think so, she hoped against hope, and persisted in her belief that the Society of the Sacred Heart would rise out of its ashes.

Full of that abiding trust, she shortly afterwards wrote

so Padre Fontana, Superior of the Barnabites, not only claiming for her Society the title of the Sacred Heart of which it was about to be deprived, but more boldly than ever she predicted that through the worship of that adorable Heart France would be saved.

We have shown what was Mother Barat's fortitude during the struggle, her generosity in submission. It is unnecessary to relate how her adversary's intrigues were revealed, and led to his ruin. It is enough to state that the letter which had raised so great a storm, and inflicted such deep wounds, was actually written by M. de Saint Estève himself. The whole design fell to the ground. Mother Barat contented herself with refuting his statements without indulging in the natural gratification of exposing his conduct. During the whole eight years this conflict had lasted, so strict was her observance of the precept of charity, that never had a word of accusation or complaint against her opponent escaped her lips or her pen. She always abstained from pronouncing his name. But others, and amongst them the Bishop of Amiens, who for some time had seen through him, did not feel obliged to observe the same reserve. Mgr. de Pressigny reassured the Society and the Mother General as to the approbation of the community at Rome. He said that they did not proceed so fast there, and before congregations were approved they had to be tested. M. de Saint Estève was obliged to abandon his foundation to its precarious fate, and returned to France, as anxious as ever to exert his zeal, but considerably lowered in public estimation.

Thus did that painful struggle end, not merely by the triumph of Mother Barat's long-suffering patience, and by the complete re-establishment of her authority which soon took place, but by the triumph of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Itself in her Society.

CHAPTER VI.

The Constitutions.

1815.

At length the time had come to produce those Constitutions, prepared with such fervent prayers, matured by such long experience, and seasoned by so many trials. Mother Barat invited the Superiors and the Assistants of all the communities to assemble at a General Council, where the statutes would be submitted to their examination. The apartment in the Rue de Sèvres in the Convent of the Dames de Saint Thomas de Villeneuve, which still belonged to Mother de Gramont d'Aster, was chosen as the place of meeting, and the 1st of November, 1815, the feast of All Saints, was fixed upon for the opening of the Council.

The summons was faithfully obeyed by the Superiors of the different houses and their Assistants. In the modest chapel of the Jesuit Fathers, Rue des Postes, the Mothers of the Council heard Mass before the opening of their deliberations. The meetings were usually held in Madame de Gramont's apartments, situated in the Convent of St. Thomas de Villeneuve. This lady, as one of Marie Antoinette's ladies-of-honour, had been the ornament of the Court of Versailles and the social parties at the Petit Trianon. Forced to fly during the evil days, she had offered at the risk of her life to return and resume her attendance on her royal mistress, but the Queen refused

to let her share her fate. After a life of exile, wandering, and poverty, nobly endured, the widowed Countess returned to France, and devoted herself to the care of her children. Two of her daughters, Antoinette and Eugénie, entered the Society of the Sacred Heart, and after a while their mother followed their example, and became a model of religious virtue. During the time of the crisis at Amiens Madame Eugénie de Gramont had faltered in her allegiance to Madame Barat; but persuaded that she had only been misled for a moment, the Mother General did not hesitate to admit her to the Council.

The Mother General presided over the meetings, at which Father Varin assisted, and also Father Julian Druilhet, who had helped to compile the Rules, and who always remained one of the most faithful supporters of the Society.

The work presented by the two Fathers was entirely new. They set aside what had been so imperfectly attempted at Amiens, and began afresh, bearing in mind no other plan or idea than that for which the Society had been founded, that of consecrating itself to the glory of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. It is thus a mixed Order which unites the spirit of the contemplative with some of the works of the active Orders. An inclosed one, insomuch that the nuns do not go out of their own houses, but the grating is dispensed with, in order that they may labour more freely for the salvation of their neighbour, while preserving the holy recollection which unites them with God.

The Institute establishes two classes of religious, one under the name of Lay-sisters, especially employed in manual work, the others bearing the title of Choir Nuns, apply themselves to the recitation of the Office in common, to the administration of the house, or the work of education. The first imitate in Jesus Christ His obscure labours at Nazareth, the others carry on His work of adoration and

preaching; but both these classes are, like Martha and Mary, true sisters of the same family. All are bound by the three vows of chastity, obedience, and poverty, to which the religious who teach add another, that of consecrating themselves to the education of youth. A Superior General is at the head of the Society. She and her Council govern the whole Order, and the Order itself, both as regards its members and its government, is subject to the Pope, bishops, and pastors, and has no other aim than that of being their most devoted child and humblest assistant.

After this general summary, the Constitutions, properly so called, relate to the organization of the Society. They are divided into four parts. The first treats of the choice of subjects suitable to the Society.

When a young girl leaves home, and asks to be admitted to "dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of her life," the Society of the Sacred Heart does not require fortune or high birth, as conditions of admittance. It is enough, as far as outward circumstances are concerned, "that her family should be respectable, her own reputation unblemished, her exterior unobjectionable, and her health good." She must also be gifted with "an upright mind, sound judgment, a pliable and docile disposition, knowledge and at least the promise of talents, and aptitude for the acquirement of whatever is wanting to her education." If she has a pure and upright intention of glorifying the Sacred Heart of Jesus and a generous desire to give herself to Him in simplicity and obedience, she is admitted; and her desire bears the mark of a true vocation. Then follows for the postulant those successive stages of probation, the rules of which compose the second part of the Constitutions. The first of these stages is the postulantship itself, which is fixed at three months for the Choir Nuns and six months for the Lay-sisters. The novitiate extends over two years.

After those two years' trial, the novice may be admitted by the Superior to make her first vows, after having been examined by the Bishop or his delegate. She is then bound to the Society, but the Society does not bind itself irrevocably to her. It reserves to itself the right of releasing her from her vows and giving her back to the world if the glory of God requires it. Under these circumstances the new religious is not yet professed, she is only an aspirant.

At the end of five years the Superior General names the aspirants who may be admitted to make their final vows. But before they are allowed to take this last and highest step, the rule appoints for them a period of *probation*, which used to be three, and has since been extended to six, months. This second noviceship, generally made at a mature age, after the first experiences of life have been gone through, is one of the most powerful means of renewal and spiritual progress, borrowed by the Sacred Heart from the Constitutions of the Society of Jesus. One of St. Ignatius' sons speaking of it has said, that it is "the masterpiece of their Founder."*

Then comes the day of profession—the full aggregation to the Society. This solemn contract, confirmed by the vow of stability, can never be dissevered by any power on earth except that of the Pope.

After having thus instituted the spiritual and interior life in its different degrees, the Constitutions enter into the exterior life of the Society and its apostolate, especially as regards the education of children ; this is the third part of the Constitutions.

The *government* of the Society was the last point on which the Council had to legislate. The principal question was the length of the term assigned to the office of Superior General. Reverend Mother Barat would gladly have given

* Père de Ravignan.

up her charge to another, for she had never so much wished to retire.

This love for a hidden life was to be again irrevocably opposed by the Council, for it was at once decided that the "office of Superior General was to be for life."

Now that the work of the Constitutions was terminated, the next important point to be considered was the foundation of a general novitiate. It was Mother Barat's desire to have at Paris a house large enough to contain such a novitiate as well as a school. She had seen how much the Society had suffered from varieties of direction in different countries, and she resolved as much as possible to obviate this evil. Another reason ranked still higher in her zealous and loving heart. In such a house the Perpetual Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament could be established. It was her favourite project.

The Council entirely entered into her views. One of the first things inscribed in the book of the Constitutions was, that the Perpetual Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament should exist in the novitiate, which as far as possible was to be confined to a single house. Paris was fixed upon for this establishment, and the Mothers of the Council, before they separated, determined on providing for that foundation. Off they went, two and two together, searching all over the town for a house. As it was then Advent, they prayed in union with Mary, seeking in Bethlehem an abode for her Son. L'Abbaye-aux-Bois was first thought of, but they had to put up with a more modest dwelling which was to be let in the Rue des Postes. The master of the school which had been carried on there, soon made way for the new tenants, and the Mother General intrusted to Madame Duchesne the necessary repairs.

The Councillors left Paris at the beginning of 1816, and soon the Mother General heard that all the houses received the rules as if directly from God, and moreover that at

Grenoble, Poitiers, and Niort they had obtained the most complete approbation of the diocesan bishops. About Amiens alone there still remained a little anxiety, but Mother Eugénie de Gramont, who had been quite won over by the generous charity of the Mother General was already entirely enlightened, and her prudence accomplished all that was required. Mother Barat went there on the 23rd of January, and invited all the Sisters to confer with her in private. The reconciliation was complete. One after another they knelt and wept at her feet, and she folded them in her arms. A novena to the Sacred Heart perfected the healing work, and on the 12th of February the Mother General informed the Bishop that the Constitutions were unanimously accepted. All the friends of the Sacred Heart rejoiced at this result. From that moment happiness was restored to the house of the Oratoire. On the 27th of April, Mother Barat departed with a deep feeling of joy and gratitude.

The crisis was over, and the Sacred Heart prepared to carry on in full strength and liberty its apostolical vocation.

A new era was beginning for that Society. The long sterility to which it had been condemned since 1808, was succeeded by a rapid extension, which promised to people with foundations, not only France and the adjoining realms, but many distant countries also. Meanwhile the religious life was organized and unified in the centre which the formation of a general novitiate had created in Paris. Mother Barat was the soul of all that interior and exterior development, and her increasing sanctity continued to keep pace with the growth of her Institute.

The time of her residence in Paris after the General Council was at first one of great interior trial. God does not often allow His saints to enjoy the good they do. He often leaves generous hearts in a state of desolation amidst

their greatest works and highest achievements. Entering as it were on a new path, she vainly sought assistance and direction from those whom she had looked to. Father Varin had betaken himself again to the labours of his own novitiate. M. Montaigne, that venerable Father in whom she had an unlimited confidence, could not even give her a quarter of an hour, or aid her, except by his prayers and sufferings. Divine love was doing its work in the heart of the Mother who was to lead to it so many others: "My God," she used to say in those hours of inward misery, "how much our poor hearts have to endure before they rest only on Thee."

On the 19th of March Mother Barat presided at the installation of the house at Beauvais, to which the community of Cuignières had been removed, the necessity no longer existing for so secluded a residence. She afterwards visited the houses at Poitiers and Niort, and returned to Paris on the 30th of June. Several novices had arrived at the house of the Rue des Postes. One of them called Octavie Berthould came from Grenoble to join Mother Duchesne, impelled by a yet unconscious vocation to a great apostolic work. The chapel of the convent was blessed on the feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. The novitiate was to be opened immediately afterwards. It rapidly increased, and almost every week a new postulant was received. One of these, Madame Cécile Camille, had been born and brought up in a royal palace. It was on the knees of Madame Elizabeth, Louis XVI.'s angelic sister, that she had learnt her first prayers. The disasters of the royal family of France, which she was fated to share, led her from her early youth to consider suffering as her vocation. At the age of eighteen, kneeling one day in the Church of Saint Sulpice, she had prayed that it might be granted to her to suffer all her life. From that moment her health seemed

gradually to decline. On that account, the Reverend Mother thought it necessary to hasten her profession. "Thank you, dear Mother," she said, "but it is Extreme Unction that you are giving me." Her courage made up, however, for her feeble strength, and she was reckoned one of the best teachers of the school in the Rue des Postes, which was then beginning to receive numerous pupils, almost all of the highest class of society.

The importance and future scope of this work was becoming apparent, but the apostleship of the house in Paris was not limited to the education of children. Its modest chapel soon grew dear to pious Catholics. Many persons came, attracted to it by their devotion to the Sacred Heart, who afterwards contributed to spread that Devotion in the Church and in the world. One young nobleman especially was often seen there, whose heart was well-nigh broken by the recent and tragical death of his wife. It was the wounded Heart of our Lord which inspired the Prince de Léon, Duc de Rohan Chabot, with the thought of offering himself as a priest and a victim in imitation of his Divine Master. The Duc Eugène de Montmorency often communicated in the little sanctuary. The Comte de la Ferronnays wished his two children, his son Charles and his eldest daughter,* to make their first Communion at that altar before their departure for St. Petersburgh, where he was named Ambassador. It was a place of meeting for those who were engaged in the religious reconstruction of France. Aged Fathers of the Society of Jesus, such as Father Grivel and Father Fontaine rejoiced to see the honour of our Lord promoted by a Devotion always maintained and cherished in their Order. The Abbé de Forbin-Janson, lately returned from the Holy

* This child was Pauline de la Ferronnays, afterwards Mrs. Augustus Craven, well known as the authoress of *Le Récit d'une Sœur* (*Translator's note*).

Land, spoke of his travels in that country, and kindled the devotion of his hearers by his descriptions of the *Via Dolorosa*. Newly promoted or newly consecrated Bishops, M. Soyer, M. de Beauregard, M. de Villèle, named to the Sees of Luçon, Montauban, and Verdun, and M. de Bombelles, who had recently become Bishop of Amiens, prayed there to the Sacred Heart for strength to bear the heavy burthen of their new office. M. l'Abbé de Lestrange, and other missionary priests, inflamed the zeal of the Sisters for the foreign missions. All these servants of God found edification in conversing with Mother Barat. The Duc de Rohan began from that time forward to venerate her as a mother, and to consult her as a saint.

She accepted these outward duties as belonging to her position, but her humility shrank from this frequent intercourse with persons of high rank, and her love for the interior life made her dislike temporal business.

In the meantime she was besieged on every side with requests for foundations. The direction of the royal house at St. Denis had been offered to her; for wise reasons she declined the proposal, but accepted the invitation of the Bishop of Quimper to establish a house of her Order in that town, and Mother Bigeu was sent there with a colony from Paris. The house he made over to them had formerly been a Capuchin convent, the aspect and state of this abode, and of the school, which was composed of ten very rustic looking little girls, was not very prepossessing, but the Sisters soon appreciated the faith of the people of Brittany, whose manners and habits are as primitive and uncultivated as its wild moors, but whose character is as solid as the granite of its rocky soil.

Mother de Gramont d'Aster was named Superior of this new community. Her favourite work was the class for poor children, in which three or four hundred little girls

were gratuitously taught, their rags were replaced by decent clothing, and their families assisted.

The increase of the school in Paris kept pace with that of the novitiate. The Mother General wishing to place at its head a mistress who would secure the confidence of the principal families of France, sent for Mother Eugénie de Gramont from Amiens, who then began that brilliant career in which, during thirty years, she displayed the happiest gifts of mind and heart, and acquired such a wonderful influence over the daughters of noble families at home and abroad.

Madame Barat, who had keen spiritual eyesight, had from the first understood all there was to admire in that highly gifted soul. Her superior abilities, her quicksightedness, her strength of character, her excellent judgment, her talent for government, that remarkable intellect, in short, which, joined to a natural grace and dignity of manner, made people entirely forget the defects of her diminutive figure. In Mother de Gramont the qualities of the soul equalled those of the mind. She was courageous, unselfish, very tender-hearted, and generous. But alongside of these great merits there were some deficiencies which could not escape the watchful eye of the Superior. In the first place there was an excessive proneness to be fascinated and influenced, a great difficulty in giving up her own impressions, a very insufficient religious education under the sole direction of M. de Saint Estève and Madame Baudemont, and, in consequence, something of their domineering and self-willed spirit, and then an interior consciousness of that flattering and dangerous homage which is involuntarily paid to high birth and superior talents. Great were the hopes, but great also were the perils involved in the possession of such gifts. The power of so remarkable a person was immense, but her singular capabilities for good were also fraught with danger both for herself and

others if abused and misdirected. The question was, to whom that ardent soul would give itself. Madame Barat was bent on winning it entirely to God and to a filial devotion to the Sacred Heart. And as, by nature, vocation, and grace, she knew only one way of subduing hearts, it was in that way she set to work. She loved this daughter of hers more than all the others. She loved her in proportion to the sorrows she had caused her, to the fears she felt, and the hopes she cherished on her account. That affection was not unrequited. Mother de Gramont's regrets for the past became so intense that her health, which had always been delicate, suffered for a time from their excess.

In the autumn of 1817 she was sent to Amiens for change of air; but a heavy trial was awaiting both her and the Mother General. Typhus fever broke out in the house of the Rue des Postes. One of the children died, and Madame Eugénie could not be persuaded to stay away from her post. She hurried back to Paris to witness the death of two more of her little pupils. Gladly would she and Mother Barat have given their lives in exchange for those of their beloved children; but such was not God's will. Two of the novices caught the disease, and died within a few days of each other. One of them, a girl of twenty, at the height of the epidemic joyfully accepted the office of infirmarian, was struck down by the fever in the exercise of her duties, and joyfully expired after pronouncing her religious vows.

The sufferings of that trying time drew from Mother Barat the following words: "God keeps me amongst the sick and the dying. Crosses abound on every side. We ought to love our vocation on that account. It is the only thing that consoles me for not being a Carmelite."

The house of Paris, checked for a moment in its progress, soon made a fresh start. Illness had, of course,

relaxed the discipline of the school. The Superior re-established it with a firmness which only increased the affection of the pupils. And from that time the work went on steadily increasing. The hour was now at hand after which Mother Duchesne, with all the ardour and impetuous zeal of her nature, and the Mother General, with the deep, earnest, patient dependence upon God and His ways which marked her character, had for years been longing. When the former had been named Secretary General at the time of the turmoil in 1815, it had seemed as if this was a death-blow to her hopes of being sent on a foreign mission, the one object of her desires. Neither Father Varin or the Mother General saw their way to its accomplishment, much as they sympathized with her intense longings for missionary work. She submitted, but did not despair. Seeing she could obtain nothing from men, she betook herself more earnestly to God. Taking advantage of the expeditions she had to make for the business of the house of Paris, she visited all the sanctuaries of the Blessed Virgin, at Montmartre, Saint Sulpice, the Carmelites, and the foreign missions, pouring forth her affliction at that dear Mother's feet, and trying, as she said, "to keep herself in a state of indifference, but soon losing her balance," and feeling ready to brave all human respect, the coldness and the blame of every one, so that, at any rate, nothing should be wanting on her part to attain her object.

This determined perseverance was beginning to move Mother Barat. A higher will than her own was influencing her. On the 2nd of December, the eve of the feast of St. Francis Xavier, Mother Duchesne went twice to the church of the missions, and with prayers and tears had recourse to his intercession. It seemed as if an invisible power was drawing her to the foot of that altar, and during all the novena that she made to obtain light as to God's will, hope filled her heart.

At last that Divine will was manifested by unmistakable tokens. On the 14th of January, 1817, Monseigneur Dubourg, Bishop of Louisiana, who was then at Paris, came to see the Mother General. It so happened that Mother Duchesne was portress that day. She opened the door to him, and went to announce his visit to her Superior. She could not help saying to Mother Barat, "This is the hour of Providence. I do beseech you, dear Mother, do not lose the opportunity. You have only to say one word: I implore you, say it." The Mother General answered, "My child, if Monseigneur gives me an opening, I can talk over the subject with him. I shall know by that sign that it is God's will."

In that first interview, the Bishop did not allude to the subject. He only proposed to say Mass the next day in the chapel. After that Mass, Mother Barat sat and conversed with him while he breakfasted, and he began at once to speak of America and his diocese, and then said how glad he should be to have daughters of the Sacred Heart there. Mother Barat replied, "When such a thing becomes possible, Monseigneur, I shall have some one quite ready to go," and she spoke to him of her friend's vocation. The Bishop was delighted with what he heard, and asked to see her. Mother Duchesne was sent for. She felt that her prayers were answered; but she could not find a word to say. All she could do was to kneel at the Bishop's feet and ask his blessing.

This brief interview filled both the Bishop and herself with hope, and she found that from that very moment a pain in the side she had suffered from for fifteen years suddenly disappeared. Light and strength seemed to have both been simultaneously vouchsafed to her, but nothing was yet decided. Many difficulties attended the affair, and as the Bishop was leaving Paris for a little while, the ultimate decision was delayed till his return.

In the meantime, he went to seek for apostles and assistance for his distant flock. All that she saw and heard of this holy prelate served to increase Madame Duchesne's zeal. He was above all things a missionary. After labouring greatly in the south, he had been named Vicar Apostolic of New Orleans, and in 1815, the termination of the war between America and England enabled him to come to Europe. He was consecrated Bishop at Rome, and thence returned to France.

In Italy he had secured the assistance of several priests and young clerics who were to accompany him to America. At Lyons, where he stopped on his way, he had not only inspired many of the clergy with a missionary spirit, but sown also the seeds of one of the greatest works of the Church in this century, for it was his eloquent and fervent preaching that gave rise to the Association of the Propagation of the Faith. At the time we are speaking of, he was travelling in the north of France and the Low Countries, recruiting associates, collecting alms, and getting together not only vessels for the altar, and other articles of church furniture, but also tools of all sorts for the tillage of the land: for he had determined to cultivate the soil, as well as to work for the salvation of souls in his diocese. Forty missionaries, whom he had persuaded to sail with him, were preparing for the New World a fresh effusion of the Holy Ghost.

Mother Duchesne was watching the advance of spring, and impatiently longing for the return of the servant of God. He arrived on the day after the feast of the Ascension. The Bishop was determined to obtain from the Mother General a definite promise. She was not quite prepared to give it, hesitated, and asked for another delay. It almost seemed as if Mother Duchesne's hopes were again doomed to be deceived.

After many fruitless entreaties, the Bishop was taking a

sorrowful leave of the Superior, she was accompanying him to the door, and both were sad and thoughtful. Just then, Mother Duchesne appeared, guessed what was going on, threw herself on her knees before her Superior, and with her hands clasped together exclaimed, "Give your consent, dear Mother, give your consent." The Reverend Mother prayed an instant in silence; God at that moment sent a ray of light into her soul; she understood it was His will, and her hesitations were over. "I grant you your request, my dear Philippine," she said, "and I will immediately occupy myself in finding companions for you."

The American mission had been carried by storm. It was agreed upon with the Bishop that in the course of the following spring, a colony of the Sacred Heart would embark for Louisiana, where he was hurrying himself and would prepare for it a place.

It was not difficult to find companions for Mother Duchesne. Many of the Sisters offered themselves.

The first was Octavie Berthold, who was then thirty years of age. She had just made her vows in the Paris Novitiate, on the feast of the Holy Martyrs of Japan. She was the daughter of an infidel philosopher, who had been one of Voltaire's secretaries, was brought up a Calvinist, and remained one till she was more than twenty; then she became a Catholic, and entered the Novitiate of Sainte Marie-d'en-Haut. Hers was one of those ardent souls, which, when they have once seen the truth, never falter in its pursuit. Her gratitude to our Lord, and her desire to devote her whole life to the service of that God, too late known and too late loved, drove her to the foreign missions.

Then Madame Audé, though only twenty-four years of age, informed Mother Barat that she was ready to embark for America, and on the eve of her departure she was professed at Paris, and made her final vows. Two Lay-sisters, both of them somewhat advanced in life and persons

of tried virtue, completed the little colony. When the parting moment came, the Mother General spoke to her dear missionaries with the deepest feeling of their happiness in being called to carry the love of the Sacred Heart into distant lands. "Oh! if you went so far," she exclaimed "to set up only one new altar and teach one poor savage to make an act of love, would not that be joy enough for this life, enough merit for eternity!"

Mother Duchesne was named Superior of the American Mission, with exceptional powers. She was almost overwhelmed with joy, that she was actually assigned the work she had so long desired, and bravely did she and her companions go through the last partings. They had to wait some time at Bordeaux for a favourable wind, and went to take leave of Monseigneur d'Aviau before they sailed, and asked his blessing. A priest who was in the room said to the Archbishop: "I cannot find out in any of their souls anything but perfect peace."

"And joy," Mother Duchesne quickly added.

At last they embarked on the *Rebecca*, which sailed from Royan on the 21st of March, 1818. Monseigneur Dubourg had sailed on the 27th of June of the preceding year, in the *Caravane*, which Louis XVIII. had placed at the disposal of the Bishop and his missionaries. He had left M. Martial, his Vicar General, to take charge of the little colony of Nuns of the Sacred Heart. He was the only priest on board the *Rebecca*. The passage, which is now accomplished in a fortnight, at that time lasted three months. Two months elapsed before any tidings of the travellers reached the mother-house. Madame Barat kept writing anxious letters to New Orleans: "We are incessantly praying that you may have a prosperous journey. How happy we shall be when we hear of your arrival."

The first letter received from Mother Duchesne was dated May 16th, the anniversary of the day when she had

obtained her Superior's consent to her departure. It was from the coast of Cuba, more than a thousand leagues from France, that she now wrote to renew her thanks for that consent, and described her voyage, which had been a most trying and even perilous one.

In the first days of August the Mother General received at last the news of the happy arrival of her missionaries. On the 25th of May the *Rebecca* had entered the waters of the Mississippi, and the little colony landed on the 29th, which happened to be that year the feast of the Sacred Heart.

Then began that long course of patient endurance, of delay, of acceptance of hardship, of suffering sweetened by joys, not to be even conceived by those who have not studied the lives of the saints, which attended the first years spent in America by Mother Barat's brave and devoted daughters. Their history, with all its vicissitudes, their trials and disappointments, the hardships of those foundations in solitary regions, amidst primeval forests, amongst hostile or indifferent populations, the gradual advance of the work which was destined to take such deep root and extend itself far and wide in the New World has been related in the life of that heroic woman of desires,* who, for twelve years, waited and prayed, and then, in her already advanced age, entered upon the course which had been the dream of her youth, the object of her existence.

Mother Barat and this beloved friend and daughter of hers never met again on earth; but a stronger tie can scarcely be conceived than the one which united them. What the soul of the Mother General had yearned to effect, Madame Duchesne was carrying out. How much she was strengthened, supported, guided, even in her most difficult path, by the wisdom, the prudence, the holy firmness of the servant of God, who, from afar, watched over

* *The Life of Mother Duchesne*, by the Abbé Baunard. Translated by Lady Georgiana Fullerton.

the slow progress at first, and then the marvellous extension of her Society in a country where its religious life was a novelty and the material and moral difficulties on a par, it would be difficult to over estimate. At the very outset of their apostolic life in America, she conveyed to the missionary Sisters the strongest encouragement they could receive, the words with which the Sovereign Pontiff Pius VII. had blessed the new mission of the Sacred Heart: "The Holy Father had seen with joy how, abandoning everything for Jesus Christ, and rising above the weakness of their sex, these religious had not been afraid to cross the ocean, to transport their pious Institute into savage countries, and to consecrate themselves to the greater glory of God, the honour of the Church, and the salvation of souls. His Holiness wished them the most prosperous success, in token of which he gave his blessing, not only to those already gone, but to all those who would prepare themselves to follow them some day."

From that time forward the Mother General lived, as it were, in spirit with her daughters on the other side of the Atlantic. She was the animating spirit of their missions. She offered up their prayers, their sorrows, their joys with her own. That wonderful gift of sympathy with which God had endowed her enabled Mother Barat to embrace the interests and assist the needs of her American religious colonies in the same tender, watchful, and energetic solicitude as those of her European children. She had, indeed, a large heart. Each year of her life seemed to widen its capacities and strengthen its powers. Foundations were multiplying in France. Savoy, where at that time the French were not liked, nevertheless invited the nuns of the Sacred Heart to its little capital. Their arrival at Chambéry was quite an ovation. Soon afterwards, however, misrepresentations and cavils threatened to overthrow the new work. Mother Barat opposed to these trials an

invincible patience. When Madame Baudemont, who had been the means of spreading them, claimed from her, on some frivolous pretext, a thousand francs, she paid the sum at once. "I will not," she said, "on account of money, let charity be wounded. Our Lord can procure for us more than that, if for His love we give it up." The storm passed away, and the home of St. Clare was left in peace to pursue its works of zeal and charity. At the end of August, the Mother General went to Lyons.

There had been for a long time question of a foundation in that city, but as the negotiations concerning it had always ended in nothing, the Mother General had meant to remain there only long enough to celebrate, in one of its famous sanctuaries, the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin. On that day she went first to the Cathedral, and communicated with great fervour in the chapel of our Lady. God was about to speak and to make His will known to her there in a supernatural manner, never known before nor afterwards repeated in the case of any other foundation.

As soon as she had received the Body of our Lord she felt suddenly enlightened, and convinced that she must found a house of her Society in Lyons. This light seemed to increase more and more during her thanksgiving, and she was so entirely confirmed in the conviction that this was God's will, that doubts, delays, and hesitations were from that time out of the question. Her own remark afterwards was, that she felt so urged to proceed, that it would have been impossible for her to resist.

Never before nor since had the Divine impulsion so powerfully and directly acted upon her. Nor is it to be wondered at that such was the case, for this house, which our Lord in Holy Communion charged Mother Barat to found, was to be one day a second centre of the Sacred Heart in France and a second novitiate of the Society.

As soon as she came out of church, the Mother General declared that a house must be immediately found in Lyons or its neighbourhood. As she was herself obliged to go on to Paris, she left this important work in the hands of Mother Bigeu, who carried it on with speed and energy. In the early days of October, a house called La Ferrandière was bought for the future convent.

It stood in the midst of a valley backed by the sunny heights of the Alps, and was surrounded with woods, meadows, and streams. From the rising ground behind it magnificent views opened on the town and the heights of Fourvières. On the 23rd of October Mother de Charbonnel came to arrange the place and open a school.

If it had depended on Mother Barat, she would have been glad to suspend for a while the course of her foundations, and to attend, as she said, to her own and her daughters' sanctification, in order to prepare themselves to fulfil the intentions of their Divine Lord. But it was no longer in her power to do so.

In the spring of 1819, on the 25th of April, a letter from Monseigneur d'Aviau proposed an establishment at Bordeaux. A holy woman, whose life had been full of vicissitudes, and marked with no ordinary sanctity, had since her widowhood established in that city a house of Sisters of Providence, and herself joined that Order. An orphanage was the work they undertook. But this poor little congregation had no novices, and was longing, as the Foundress expressed it, to be merged in the Sacred Heart. Madame de Lalanne feared that her advanced age—she was then sixty-two—the simplicity of her companions, the poverty of her orphans, would not be considered worthy of such an affiliation.

Monseigneur d'Aviau felt the same misgivings: but the answer he received from the Mother General dispelled them. "I had made up my mind," she said, "not to make

any new foundation for at least two years to come; but I venture to assure your Grace that Madame de Lalanne's establishment attracts me in preference to far more brilliant proposals; just because of the spirit of humility, poverty, and simplicity which prevails in it. I think that work will draw us nearer to the Heart of our Divine Master, and will bring a blessing on our Society." And to the aged lady herself she wrote, "Your work is so pleasing to our Lord, that I could not refuse your offer. It will bring down blessings on our Society, and your house will soon be the one we shall love best."

Two months afterwards Madame de Lalanne was professed a nun of the Sacred Heart by Monseigneur d'Aviau, in the presence of Mother Geoffroy. The Mother General wished her to retain her title of Superior, and took care to procure for her all the dispensations which her fervour declined but her age required. She wrote to her as follows: "Submit out of obedience to all the mitigations which are necessary for you. Do not change anything exteriorly in your manner of life. I commend your delicacy regarding the vow of poverty, but you must consider likewise your position. Continue to make your annual present to your nephew, and make no change in your bequests to your niece and your goddaughter." The same indulgent and disinterested spirit marked all the Superior's directions to Madame de Lalanne.

At Paris steps were taken to provide a new house for the novitiate. The one in the Rue des Postes no longer sufficed for it and for the school. Another was found at no great distance in the Rue de l'Arbalète.

In the midst of her journeys the Mother General contrived to spend a few days at Grenoble, which she called "The place of her rest." It was a refreshment to her soul to converse with the Superior of that house, the saintly Mother Theresa, and she had another daughter there who

was very dear to her heart, the young Euphrosyne Jouve, Madame Duchesne's niece, on whom she had built such great hopes. She was now called Aloysia, having taken that name out of devotion to St. Aloysius Gonzaga, on the day of whose feast she had entered the novitiate at Grenoble. But this appellation had proved, in her case, something beyond the assumption of a new name. It influenced her whole life; her eyes were continually fixed on this young and saintly model of the religious life; she was favoured by intimate communications with him, and her fate, both in life and in death, bore a marvellous resemblance to that existence she had so singularly studied, and, as it were, transmuted into her own.

All the bright promises of this young girl's childhood had been amply realized. After finishing her course of studies she spent a short time with her family in Lyons. Many advantageous marriages were offered to her acceptance, but she never wavered in her devotion, and soon returned as a postulant to her beloved house of Sainte Marie-d'en-Haut. From that moment her sacrifice was complete.

She was most highly gifted both in person and in mind, exceedingly well-informed, charming in conversation, endowed with a wonderfully active intellect and musical talents of the highest order. But when she abandoned the world the young novice entirely renounced herself. All that man despises and God esteems became the choice of her heart. All natural impetuosity was subdued, and when in her twentieth year she made her vows her whole being was under the sovereign dominion of God.

Mother Barat fully appreciated the treasure which her Society possessed in Aloysia. She united the two qualities most dear to her own heart, the simplicity of a child and the spirit of an apostle. Mother Duchesne had reckoned on her for America, and the young religious had herself

cherished that hope, but a day came when light was given her to see that God had chosen for her another kind of martyrdom. Mother Barat's apprehensions coincided but too well with this presentiment. In March, 1817, she began to conceive great fears about her health. During a retreat Aloysia made three months after her first vows, she suffered from a pain in her foot, and an intimation was given her that the sacrifice God required of her was at hand.

One of the novices asked her which of St. Aloysius' virtues she most coveted. "Alas!" she answered, "I do not know what to say, for I am not like him in anything; but at any rate I have always believed that I shall die at the same age as he did."

From that time forward she who had been so full of life and strength, began to evince symptoms of so rapid a decay that it was at once declared to be mortal. Five wounds on her body gave her a likeness to Jesus Christ on the Cross, and a long agony began which was to last five years.

During that time innumerable prayers were put up for the holy child of the Sacred Heart. Communions were offered up in all the communities, but whilst others were supplicating that she might live, Aloysia was longing to leave this world. Sometimes she wept at the obstinate desire evinced to keep her in the land of exile. During the time the Mother General spent at Grenoble she scarcely left the bedside of her beloved daughter, and silently gazed upon her with a kind of veneration. She often dressed her wounds, and when they were alone pressed them gently with her lips. The young girl was deeply affected by the humility and tenderness of her Superior, and was wont to say that if the Mother General had remained at Grenoble, she would have been afraid of loving her too much.

Time elapsed without any improvement in the state of the young religious, except as regarded her sanctity. In the autumn of the following year, 1819, Mother Barat returned to Grenoble, and found her full of the joy which arose from her complete surrender of herself.

But not yet despairing of touching the Heart of our Lord by a last effort and appeal, she sought to strengthen the tie which would bind her child to life. Before her departure she called together all the community with the exception of Aloysia, and announced to them that as she was obliged to take away Mother Theresa for awhile to Lyons, she was going to leave as their Superior, during her absence, the youngest and most infirm of their Sisters, but the one she believed to be the nearest to God. "The more I see of her," she said, "the more I discover in her a singular wisdom. I have thought it then right before God to intrust to her the government of a house, which she has edified and blessed by her example." She named her Assistant and Admonitrix to Mother Theresa. When this decision was communicated to Aloysia, she trembled and wept, then looking only at the Cross, she said: "Let God be my all."

These new responsibilities could not bind to life the young Mother, but they called forth her activity to a degree which appeared almost miraculous. Though her sufferings were incessant, she said that work kept her from thinking of them. Dragging herself along on her crutches, and going wherever her duties called her, she wrote, she dictated, she gave lessons, and instructed the pupils, whom she assembled round her bed of suffering. Often she was seen in the dormitories walking with effort from bed to bed, and giving their medicines to the sick children. But the work for which God seemed specially to prolong Aloysia's life was the conversion of her brother Henry, who was at that time studying law at Grenoble. Misled by the false-

hoods of the world, this young man was living in total neglect of God. She saw him often, spoke to him of his soul, showed him the greatest affection, and edified him in a way which prepared the change which her intercession was soon to obtain.

In the spring of 1820 her state became hopeless, she could no longer leave her bed, and the doctor announced that the end was fast approaching. Full of joy at that assurance Aloysia begged him to repeat it several times, and from that moment she would not let any one speak to her of anything but death and Heaven. After some days of recollection she wrote a last farewell to the Mother General, in which she said, "I will not speak of the wish I might have to see you again, and to receive your blessing before my death. I abandon it to the Sacred Heart of our good Master." In the same way she wrote consoling letters to her family and her friends, and after having thus loosened herself from all earthly ties went into retreat, and awaited death as only saints await it. She breathed her last on the 21st of January, 1821, the feast of St. Agnes. She was not quite twenty-five years old.

When the Mother General heard of her death, she raised her eyes as if seeking in Heaven for the soul of her dear child. So pure a spirit, she thought, must have reached its heavenly home, and this confidence was increased by the miraculous effects ascribed to Aloysia's intercession, and especially by the influence it seemed to exercise on all the members of her family.

On the 24th of March, writing to Mother Duchesne, Madame Barat says: "I am expecting your two nieces, Amélie and Constance, to join the novitiate; they persevere in their vocations. Their brother Henry has determined to become a Jesuit. It is a real miracle of grace, for he was in a very different state of mind before his sister's death. Our friends will bring you the narrative of all the

wonders which have been affected by her intercession. What a consolation for you !"

We need not dwell on the admiration, the emotion, the tears with which Aloysia's aunt received the account of her saintly death, and, as she expressed it, "at being so far surpassed in virtue by so young a girl."

The course of our narrative carries us back to Paris, where the Sacred Heart was beginning to widen its sphere of action and to organize its works. An epoch of extraordinary development and proportionate success was opening before it, but one not unattended by danger and temptation. The danger of prosperity, the temptation of worldliness.

We shall show in the following chapters, by what means the servant of God overcame that trial, kept off that danger, and maintained by her example a solid spirit of humility in her Order.

CHAPTER VII.

The Third General Council.

1820.

The education of women has always been one of the most anxious solicitudes of the Catholic Church. Since the eighteenth century a multitude of religious orders and congregations opened schools for girls. The Ursulines, the Benedictines, the Nuns of the Visitation, and many other societies, had devoted themselves to that work.

Mother Barat was the first to recognize and to extol their merits and their labours. Her own Institute was not intended to supplant or to replace them. It offered itself in its day, and as the last of all, to serve the same cause, to characterize its work by a special dedication to the Sacred Heart, and to enlist in its behalf the consummate experience which the Jesuits, its first founders, have acquired in their colleges. The original plan of Father de Tournély and his successor was to establish for girls an analogous system of education, with the modifications which a woman's faculties and her vocation naturally demand. The Council of 1815 had begun to organize this plan, and it was principally with the view of carrying it out, that the Mother General convened the one of 1820.

The Superiors of all the houses were assembled in Paris. It is remarkable how fitted these Reverend Mothers seemed to be in different ways for the work assigned to them. Some of them—Mother de Charbonnel for instance—had

been trained from childhood in the traditions of those old French families, so Christian and so honourable, in the simplicity of their provincial existence. Others, such as Mother de Gramont d'Aster, had known the life of courts and the trials of emigration. Mothers Geoffroy and Desmarquest were intimately acquainted with the girls of that middle class, which was about to become so powerful, and poor children and orphans had never ceased to be the constant care of Mother de Lalanne.

If it is to be a work of self-devotion, education does not require mere mistresses, but mothers who will devote to it their hearts and their lives. The aim and object of the nuns of the Sacred Heart is to combine the tenderness of a parent towards their pupils, with the delicate care of their souls which a religious spirit alone can inspire and direct. They look on their vocation as a sort of priesthood, and try to make their schools not merely a substitute for home education, but a sanctuary in which children live, as it were, in an atmosphere of piety. Their object is to train them in what Bossuet called "the incomprehensible seriousness of Christian life, to oppose reason to mere feeling, prudent wisdom to religious excitement, and a true and generous energy to a false sentimentality." In the secular teaching the same principle prevails, that of making young girls learn everything which is most important for them to know as regards the life they are to lead and the society they are to mix in. And if this is to be the ultimate end of a woman's studies, it sets them also a limit by excluding everything frivolous and useless—all that merely serves to promote vanity and to destroy the simplicity and humility which belongs to the religion of Jesus Christ. Public displays, which turn a house of education into a sort of academy, are not allowed in the schools of the Sacred Heart. Against this practice it required later on all Mother Barat's firmness, joined to her faithful adherence to the

spirit of her Order, to make a stand, but this she invariably did, and in accordance with the spirit of the Constitutions ever discouraged the too sedulous cultivation of talents which are apt to over-excite the interior faculties to the prejudice of the higher gifts of the soul. Domestic economy, on the contrary, and needle-work she considered an essential part of education. The model set before the scholars of the Sacred Heart is the valiant woman whose fingers have taken hold of the spindle, who has sought wool and flax, and put out her hand to strong things. Upon these questions, and others of secondary importance, the General Council of 1820 deliberated. It formed rules for the schools, compiled a ceremonial, and added to the bulk of the Constitutions the summary of the rules which Father Varin had just drawn up in his solitude at Montrouge. And then the Society reckoned up its riches: It had received without dowry three hundred and eighty-three persons! The poor schools they considered another of their treasures. They continually increased in number. The house of Paris had not yet opened one, but to make up for this delay a number of poor families came to the convent several times a week, and mistresses and pupils shared the honour of waiting upon them.

Poverty and the poor had chiefly occupied the thoughts of the Council. Father Varin had told its members that the ties which must bind them to the Heart of their Master were poverty, simplicity, humility, and abjection. This exhortation was well timed at a moment when the Sacred Heart was about to make a considerable acquisition which was to bring it conspicuously before the eyes of the world. The rooms and even the garrets of the little house in the Rue de l'Arbalète, were filled to overflowing. Fifty-eight nuns and novices were crowded into it, the school of the Rue des Postes could hardly hold the actual scholars, and it was impossible to take in any others. At its first sitting,

the Council decided on the removal of the establishment to another house. The Mother General would have wished it to be spacious, but at the same time simple. It was only after long and fruitless searches, and many hesitations, that she made up her mind to the purchase of the Hotel Biron.

On the left bank of the Seine, in a quiet quarter of the town, which in the time of Henry IV. was outside the walls of Paris, there was a wide extent of ground which formerly belonged to the Abbots of St. Germain. On a part of this land Louis XIV. had erected the Hotel des Invalides, laid out its esplanade and its gardens. One of the Councillors of Louis XV., M. de Moras, had bought near this establishment a large property of several acres between the Rue de Babylone and the Rue de Varennes, and built on the side of that last street a magnificent residence. This hotel, which has always preserved the same appearance, has been inhabited by a succession of very different persons, and witnessed many vicissitudes of fortune. In the last instance, the Duc de Charost had inherited this possession, and ended there a life devoted to peaceful studies and the exercise of charity.

His widow had lived there in retirement twenty years, when she proposed to sell it to the Sacred Heart for a moderate price. This was one of those indications of God's will which Madame Barat always took heed of, and felt inclined to act upon. But though the price mentioned was small compared to the value of the property, it exceeded too much the resources of the Society to allow of the purchase being made solely by its own means. The Council General determined to petition the King for a subsidy, and chose for that purpose an elderly novice who had just left the Court, where she was still loved and respected under the name of the Countess de Marbeuf.

This lady went to the Tuileries, and obtained from Louis XVIII. the promise of a gift of a hundred thousand

francs. The remainder of the required sum was borrowed, and the Hotel Biron purchased on the 5th of September.

The preparatory works were immediately begun. The pictures and mirrors removed from the walls, and almost the whole of the gilding. But even when despoiled of its worldly ornaments, the house seemed too magnificent for the spouses of the God of Nazareth, and the General Council decided that it should be devoted entirely to the school, and that the community should lodge as best it could in the outbuildings formerly occupied by the servants and the poultry. "Our children," Madame Barat said, "must have always and everywhere the best of everything."

All this grandeur only gave her a greater taste for lowliness; she sought out every occasion for it, and some of her most fashionable visitors found her sometimes occupied in the humblest manner. Some days before the removal to the Hotel Biron, the Duke de Montmorency, calling at the Rue des Postes, to speak on the subject to the Mother General, found her in the porter's lodge with a broom in her hand, busily sweeping: "Ah, Madame," he exclaimed, "I have caught you in the fact; what are you doing there?" "What I ought to have done all my life, M. le Duc, if I had been left in my proper place," she answered.

The novitiate was first installed in its humble tenement. The small low rooms in which the Sisters were lodged bore the names and the marks of various domestic functionaries who had formerly occupied them, such as cooks, scullions, barbers, and grooms. The stables were turned into community rooms. Madame Barat was quite pleased.

It was on the 4th of October that the novitiate took possession of its quarters. On the first Friday of the month Father Druilhet said Mass there, the first that was said at the Hotel Biron.

On the following Sunday the Holy Sacrifice was offered

up by Father Varin, and the novices were afterwards assembled to receive his blessing. He asked on what day they had been installed in their new abode, and when he heard that it was on St. Francis of Assisi's day, he said with a smile, "Ah, this is rather a splendid house for the feast of so poor a Saint. Oh, how he loved poverty." And then he poured forth, as usual, one of those familiar and charming addresses which came straight from his heart. "That Saint," he said, "went one day to visit one of his convents which had lately been founded, and was disedified by its beauty: 'Let us go away,' he said to his companions, 'a poor servant of Christ cannot think of lodging in this place.' Thus speaking, he withdrew quite depressed, and was glad to find a poor barn, where he spent the night. This made me think, my children, that if St. Francis came to visit you, he would not be pleased at first with this princely mansion, but afterwards when he saw the part of it that you have chosen, he would acknowledge you for his Sisters in Jesus Christ." And he said that when people expressed surprise at the establishment of his daughters in the Hotel Biron, his answer was: "They are there indeed, but they do not live in it."

The school was moved on the 10th of October, and on that day, the feast of St. Francis Borgia, Mass was said for the last time in the little chapel of the Rue des Postes.

In the palace in which she was established, the Mother General was, if possible, still more humble, still more lowly, than twenty-four years before in her poor room of the Rue de Touraine. "How much we must love poverty when we live in a fine house," Father Varin was wont to say; "and how we must love humiliation when we have to deal with the world, and the great ones of the world."

After a sitting of two months, the General Council had terminated its work. The assembly dispersed, leaving Mother Barat at the Hotel Biron. Applications were

addressed to her from every side for new foundations. Many of them had to be refused, but promising houses were established at Le Mans and at Autun. Paray le Monial had been thought of, but Mother Barat yielded precedence to the hereditary rights of the Visitation. "It is impossible," she said, "to think of the house at Paray. The Nuns of the Visitation have put forward their claim, and it is fair to give way to them."

The most unexpected consolation awaited her on her return to Paris. The house of Ghent had undergone many hard trials since its separation from the Society. It had been persecuted by the Government of the Low Countries, its school had been suppressed, and the community dispersed. In that extremity one of its principal members, Madame de Limminghe, bethought herself of the Sacred Heart. At the close of the year 1823 she arrived in Paris, and after a long retreat of thirty days was re-admitted into Mother Barat's Society. Touched and happy at the way in which she had been welcomed back, Mother de Limminghe entreated her Superior, Mother de Peñaranda, to come and judge herself of the extreme kindness of their former Mother. Not much urging was required; and in the beginning of January, 1823, the Superior of Ghent and her assistant, Mother Henriette Coppens, came to Paris, and on their knees before Mother Barat, implored to be reunited to the Society. "Oh, why should you not all come back?" the Mother General exclaimed as she embraced them. Seventeen of the nuns of Ghent followed their example. Those who had been received after the separation re-entered the novitiate. The others, with Mother de Peñaranda at their head, were soon professed in Father Varin's presence.

A foundation was made at that time at Turin. It had been brought about by the pious zeal of King Charles Felix and his Queen Maria Christina, and a lady whose name is

associated with innumerable good works, the excellent Marquise de Barol. A fine convent, surrounded with magnificent cloisters, which went by the name of the Crucifix, was made over to the Sacred Heart, and on the 3rd of August, 1823, Mother Bigeu arrived there with her colony, to the joy of the Court and town.

The religious of a little community at Metz, called the Congregation of St. Sophie, implored the Sacred Heart to save their society from total extinction. In this instance the Mother General hesitated. Her prudence began to take alarm at so many new foundations. "We only advance when compelled to do so," she said. "When this is the case we take it as a token of God's will." She consulted Father Varin; he encouraged her to trust and proceed. "I quite feel, my dear Reverend Mother," he wrote, "that there is something to apprehend in the too rapid extension of your Society. But, on the other hand, I think you will be ready with an answer to our Lord, and that you can fairly say to Him, 'It was Thy Providence, O Lord, that seemed to pursue us and constrain us to go forward.'"

The amalgamation took place, and eighteen ladies of St. Sophie received the habit of the Society. The house they lived in had been inhabited, according to tradition, by St. Colette.

At Bordeaux a similar amalgamation had been long asked for by the community of the Mesdames Vincent. In their eagerness for it they had adopted the rules, the dress, and even the name of the Society. Mother Barat was advised to protest against this usurpation by an appeal to the authority of Mgr. Frayssinous. But this was not the way in which the Mother General was wont to feel and to act. She wrote at that time to Mother Emilie: "If it had not been for the scandal which the existence of these two independent communities would produce, I would have left them free to do as they liked, and would not have

troubled myself about it. I agree on that point with your Mother Geoffroy. God is our common Father; I like to see Him loved and glorified by everybody. People say and think that they must stand up for their rights; they deceive themselves in that way. How many abuses creep into the Church on that pretext! It would be much better to unite the two communities. Pray, and get prayers for this important business."

She went herself to Bordeaux to confer with the Mesdames Vincent. At Blayes she was welcomed in one of their houses, but complained of a want of simplicity in her reception. "I am wearied at the over-polite manner with which I am treated. No sooner had I arrived than the doctor called to know how I was, and whether I required his services. I quickly bowed him off; you know how much I enjoy ceremony."

From Blayes Mother Barat went by boat to Bordeaux, where her daughters had been longing for her visit since the union with Madame de Lalanne's community. There she effected a similar union with Madame Vincent's, and from that time forward the Sacred Heart had two houses in that city—the Sablonnat, under Mother de Lalanne, and St. Eulalie, under Madame Vincent.

In the intervals between these foundations a succession of bereavements tended to increase Mother Barat's distaste of the world. She felt acutely her mother's death, which occurred in 1822, and the sacrifice—the greatest a religious has to make—of not attending her in her last moments. This great grief was followed by the loss of M. Montaigne, the only person, she told a friend, who had ever been thoroughly acquainted with her soul. "Oh, let us belong to God alone!" she exclaimed when, one after another, those who had been most dear to her departed from this earth. It seemed soon afterwards as if the hour of her own summons to another world was at hand. She had

been four months in Paris when some anxious and troublesome affairs called her to Sainte Marie-d'en-Haut.

The Superior at that house, the saintly Mother Theresa, whose ardent love of God and simplicity of character were so akin to her own, was one of Madame Barat's most beloved daughters. It was necessary, perhaps, that the Foundress should learn by experience how the absence of prudence and good judgment can bring about the ruin of a house, even when in the hands of a saint.

Mother Theresa, absorbed by intense longings for Heaven, had too much neglected earthly work. The members of her community were unguided and irregularly directed. There was a want of discipline in the school, and even the rule of enclosure was insufficiently observed. In order to encourage public devotion to the deceased Aloysia, the house had been thrown open to those who came to visit her tomb, and in spite of the prudent recommendation of the Mother General, an injudicious publicity was given to the miracles ascribed to her intercession. In vain had she remonstrated. Her exhortations were not understood, and had remained unheeded. In addition to this state of things, which caused her the greatest anxiety, and which when she saw it with her own eyes exceeded her worst previsions, she found the house of Grenoble head over ears in debt, and threatened with the most serious difficulties. Expensive improvements of all sorts had been made—all, indeed, for the advancement of God's glory, but without consideration of the reckless expense they involved and the dangers, which made Mother Barat exclaim: "Oh, how we ought to beware of debt! Its consequences are deplorable! It involves the loss of the religious spirit." These trials weighed on her the more, that out of an excess of charity she scrupled to impart them to her friends and assistants. Father Varin blamed this reserve, and told her that she kept her sorrows too much shut up in her own

heart. The fact was that Mother Barat had one of those tender and sensitive natures which gives a capacity for long and refined suffering—a great treasure in a person's nature, but one which, like a sword, wears out the scabbard. Her health had suffered from the journey, and still more from the distress of mind she endured. In order to disguise from herself her increasing illness, she worked with a feverish activity, looking into everything, making her plans and maturing them in prayer. The winter was meanwhile advancing: her chest was sore and her breathing oppressed. She did not complain, but felt very ill, and it is easy to see by the letters she wrote at that time that her thoughts were all turned to Heaven, and that she believed herself on the way to it.

Soon her sufferings increased so much that the physicians declared the Mother General to be dying. Instantly all the houses of the Society betook themselves to prayer, and the children of their various schools all lifted up to Heaven their innocent hands. One of them, who was a pupil of the house of Amiens, and nearly related to Mother Barat, did more than pray. She offered up to God the sacrifice of her life, in exchange for that of the Mother General. We may venture to say that the sacrifice was accepted, for she died; and the time of her death coincided too exactly with the period and the circumstances of that venerated Superior's recovery, not to warrant the belief that it was one of those generous substitutions allowed of in touching imitation of the great example of love given to us by God Himself.

We have seen how strong, though self-denying, was the attachment of Mother Barat to her family. She had afforded an excellent education to her two nephews, Louis and Stanislaus. The first was a priest, and earnestly bent on devoting himself to the foreign missions. The other had just obtained through his aunt's influence, a good appoint-

ment at the Ministry of Finance. Her nieces had been brought up under her superintendence. Two of them were professed nuns in the Society. Another, Sophie, had just taken the veil at the Paris Novitiate; and the sixth and youngest, Dosithée Dusaussoy, was a pupil at the house at Amiens. She was clever, generous, warm-hearted, and so highly gifted, that Father Barat, delighted to find in her a likeness to his "little sister" of other days, was already thinking of guiding her along the same path. Her aunt alluded to this in a letter to Mother Prevost. "You would laugh," she said, "to hear my brother advising Dosithée to read Rodriguez. That child is full of feeling. She has an excellent heart made for God. I hope we shall have her."

It was indeed God's will to have her, but in an unexpected and different manner. The tidings of her aunt's illness had thrown Dosithée into a state of great agitation. One day that she had been listening to all that was being said around her as to the immense and terrible loss which the Society was apprehending, the courageous little girl exclaimed: "And I, of what use am I to the glory of God? I am going to ask Him to die instead of my aunt, and I will pray with so much fervour that I hope He will grant my request."

On the Sunday of the Good Shepherd, when the Gospel sets before us the example of God giving His life for those He loves, the holy child made her Communion with extraordinary fervour. She was quite well at that moment, but shortly afterwards showed symptoms of fever, and was placed in the infirmary, but there seemed to be nothing serious in her indisposition. One of the nuns went to tell her in her bed that her aunt was better, she replied: "If my aunt is better, I shall soon be worse." A little friend of hers paid her a visit. She said to her, as she was going away: "Come, give me a kiss: it will be for the last time."

The young visitor only laughed, so little serious did her complaint appear. When Reverend Mother Prevost and her mistresses come to see her, she embraced them with wonderful affection. At first the illness seemed to subside, and she was supposed to be getting better, when on the Saturday, May the 3rd, Dosithée was seized with sickness and became delirious. This created alarm, and prayers were made that she might at least recover so as to go to confession. And it did thus happen. She was conscious for a while, receiving a last absolution and Extreme Unction, and, unable as she was to speak, pointed to her mouth to express her desire for Holy Communion; but delirium returned, and at four o'clock the following morning, May the 4th, Mother Barat's young niece surrendered to God her soul which she had freely offered up.

Nor was there any delay in the reward of that offering. The Mother General was restored to health the very day of Dosithée's death. On the 4th of May, 1823, Dr. Bilon, Professor and Secretary of the Academy of Medicine at Grenoble, was writing thus to Dr. Terral, the medical attendant of the house at Amiens: "After forty-five days of illness and many vicissitudes, Madame Barat is now entirely convalescent. I have sanctioned her taking several sorts of light food. She has been sitting up for nearly two hours; and without some accident, which I see no reason to apprehend, the Mother General will soon be as well as her community and all her friends can wish. *Her illness is, in fact, over.* I rejoice at being able to give you these happy tidings."

The coincidence between the date of this letter and the day of Dosithée's death was a ray of light for Mother Prevost, and she wrote as follows to Mother Audé: "Our Reverend Mother General is completely convalescent, after an illness of forty-five days. We have been very near losing her: there has been every reason to fear it. But God

heard our prayers and accepted the sacrifice of the youngest of her nieces, who offered to die in her stead, 'not being,' she said, 'of any use herself to the glory of God.'"

As soon as Mother de Charbonnel and Mother Eugénie de Gramont had been apprised of their Reverend Mother's danger, they had hastened to her side. She availed herself of their assistance in the arrangement of the affairs which had brought her to Grenoble. Sometime afterwards she wrote to Mother Duchesne: "It was almost a miracle that I did not die of the pain I felt at the state of the house at Grenoble," and then she added that, "Mother Victoire Paranque was then Superior of the house, and that everything was improving. The good Mother Theresa was doing wonders at Quimper, where she had not to attend to the school or the temporal management of the house. Mother Olympie Rombau was at the head of those departments, and governed them both admirably."

Before she left Grenoble, Mother Barat prayed at the grave of her dear Aloysia, and addressed a last strange request to her spiritual daughter. It has been already mentioned that the great resort to the convent occasioned by the miracles wrought through the intercession of the departed servant of God had been to the Superior General an occasion of anxiety. Father Roger had, for one, severely scolded her on that subject. "Is it true what I hear, Reverend Mother?" he said. "Your Aloysia takes it into her head to work miracles? Pride will soon ruin all your nuns."

The Superior excused herself by declaring that she had had nothing to do with it; but the alleged danger to humility left her no peace of mind, and she went and begged the wonder-working little saint to stop at once performing prodigies which brought the Society too much into notice. The obedient daughter obeyed: for after that day no more miracles were heard of.

Mother Desmarquest once questioned the Mother General as to the truth of that fact. Mother Barat seemed a little embarrassed and did not answer at first. Then, evading the question, she said that she had certainly wished that the great concourse of persons should cease, as it disturbed the good order of the house at Grenoble.

At the end of May, the Mother General was able to return to Paris. She had felt as if the end of her course was all but reached; but she was only half-way on the road to it. With renewed ardour, she pressed forward in the heavenly path, and wrote at that time to Mother Duchesne: "Pray, and make others pray, that I may make a better use than I have hitherto done of the life God has given me back."

The contrast that existed at the Hotel Biron between the side of the building occupied by the novitiate and the part devoted to the school, exemplified the spirit of the Institute. Nothing could be more poor and shabby than the one, or more splendid and magnificent than the other.

Monseigneur Frayssinous' position as Superior of the house, and his reputation which was every day increasing, contributed to recommend it. The virtues of Mother Barat attracted him, for he considered her as a type of religious perfection. He used to open his heart to her, took her advice, and asked for her prayers. Two years afterwards his nomination to the Ministry of Public Instruction and Worship obliged him to give up his title of Superior of the house in Paris, but it changed nothing in his devotion to it.

The Archbishop named in his place as Superior the Abbé Desjardins, another admirable specimen of apostolic and priestly virtue.

But it was not only the principal ecclesiastical dignitaries, but the Court itself, which piety and the current of public opinion were driving to the Sacred Heart. Mother

Barat's first impulse had been and still was, to shun these honours. She used to say that to appear before strangers was what tired her most, and that if she had ventured to wish anything, it would have been that some one else should receive the visitors. As often as was possible, she excused herself on these occasions, though never refusing to admit persons whom it was right or charitable to see.

The princes of the royal family of France honoured the Sacred Heart at that time with marks of very particular favour, they all wished to contribute to the decoration of the chapel of the school which was built that year. This Court favour, and the popularity which resulted from it, were the means by which Providence brought under Madame Barat's influence a great number of children of the higher class. She had not sought this kind of success for her Paris school, and her own inclinations would have led her to prefer a less brilliant description of work. But much as she dreaded the responsibility attached to this position, she did not shrink from its duties, and devoted herself to this new set of children intrusted to her care with her usual zeal and tenderness. It was an arduous task, and we find her writing to Madame Duchesne: "It is no small burthen to have ninety families to see, to listen to, to correspond with; considering, too, that our pupils are the children of noblemen and statesmen. Oh, my dear Philippine, how much easier it would be to Christianize the savages, they would not make so great an abuse of God's graces. Not but that some of our children are good and seriously inclined, but how much care and trouble it takes to bring about that result."

The Mother General took a great deal of that trouble on herself. Mother de Gramont had so much to do at the head of the house of Paris, that it would have been impossible for her to carry it on without that efficient

support. "I have no one to give her," Mother Barat said, "so I must do my best myself. God will help me." Some times Madame de Genlis, who was then more than eighty years of age, condescended to favour the Mother General with her own views on the subject of education. They were such as could be expected. Mother Barat listened with deference, in order to have an opportunity of saying a few words in return about God and religion. "Guess who has been sitting with me?" she would say to her daughters. "No more nor less a person than Madame de Genlis." And then she went to pray in the chapel for better lights than the aged authoress could afford her.

Education in Mother Barat's eyes was not a thing that turned on petty contrivances, or even on great talents. She considered it to be a supernatural work, and it was in that spirit she wrote to the mistresses general and teachers, both at Paris and elsewhere. "Make sure of this, that you will influence the hearts of others if you are yourself faithful and united by self-sacrifice to your Divine Spouse, for then you will act by His spirit and in concert with Him." After the first duty of loving God, the second precept she impressed upon the Sisters was that of loving the children committed to their care, and thus winning their affections.

The way in which Mother Barat understood that love of children, which she so strongly inculcated, was this: "There must be no austerity about it," she said. "It is a terrible disadvantage in a mistress to have a scolding and severe manner with her pupils. It sets them against the house. A sort of weariness spreads over the school, and, in consequence, a dislike to piety."

But, on the other hand, there must be firmness. The nuns must be kind to the children, "as kind as possible, but they must not be allowed to flatter their teachers, or endeavour to get round them. The more real affection is,

the less will it admit of flattery. It is by devoted care, and not by caresses it must show itself."

She was herself like a mother amidst the pupils. As soon as they caught sight of her in one of the alleys of the garden a circle was immediately formed round the Mother General. They felt that she read their hearts, and they were opened to her without reserve. She made them play in her presence and gave them prizes for their games. If she told them a story they hung on her lips, and then in private she used to speak to them of their parents and their homes. Her maternal solicitude extended to the minutest details. Often and often in the midst of her affairs and overwhelming correspondence, she would leave everything in order to take the place of the infirmarian by the bedside of a sick child, with whom she played with as much interest as if she had been herself a child.

The studies were also an object of constant solicitude to Mother Barat. She valued a taste for literature when well directed, as a means of elevating the soul, of opening to it an extended and higher range of thought, detaching it from material objects and awakening heavenly aspirations. Religious instruction especially she insisted upon. Not only would she have the pupils taught the elements of Christian doctrine, but she wished them to rest their faith on sound principles of philosophy, so as to be able, if necessary, to give an account of it to others.

In her own instructions to the children, Mother Barat pointed out to them how great an honour it is to be allowed to work for our Lord, whether for His altar or for His poor. She also impressed upon them the duty of caring for servants and dependants, of watching over their health, their welfare, above all their spiritual interests, and often quoted the examples found in Scripture and history, of servants being considered as members of a family, and

ending their lives in rest and comfort in the home where for years they laboured. Kindness and liberality towards domestics under all circumstances, in travelling and in visiting, as well as in a person's own household, seemed to her a duty for those belonging to the higher classes of life, and when her Paris children showed generosity in this respect, she was delighted. "You are my own children," the Mother General then said, and those words one of them tells us would have made them go from one end of the world to another.

She did not suffer any distinction of rank or of party in the school. Amongst all those young girls there were several towards whom she exercised a generosity the delicacy of which is evinced by her letters. These were the daughters of persons in affliction or in reduced circumstances. Little children were particularly dear to her. She pleaded guilty to this preference which increased as life advanced; and there was another class of pupils for whom Mother Barat was also well known to have a weakness—the incorrigible children, or at any rate those considered such by their mistresses. She had a sort of supernatural intuition of the latent qualities in a soul, which made her discern satisfactory symptoms where others did not perceive even any ground for hope. Mother de Gramont wrote to her once quite in despair at the utter impossibility of managing one of her pupils. "I do not really know," the Mother General answered, "what to advise you; I am quite at my wit's end as to any suggestion about Annette. She is a hot-headed child, but bear with her till I return; we shall see then what can be done. Get her to write to me, that I may have an opportunity of answering." In the hands of the Mother General the hot-headed and warm-hearted little girl become quite another creature. She turned out a great Christian, a courageous friend of her saintly mistress, a devoted servant

of God, of the Church, and of the poor, and the zealous protectress of every generous work.

Another child of the same family was equally turbulent, rebellious in school, and the terror of her companions—Theresa's nature was too impulsive to endure the restrictions of regular rules. Mother Barat removed her for awhile from the round of school duties, and herself assumed the government of this young rebel. She kept her under her own eyes, and gave her a rule of life in which running about the garden played a considerable part. She took her often with her into what was at that time called the field. They were accompanied on these occasions by a pet lamb, which had attached itself to the Mother General at Bordeaux, and had been transferred to the pleasure-grounds of the Hotel Biron. The freedom of this life in the open air and frequent conversations with Madame Barat gradually tamed the impetuous Theresa, and reconciled her to a school existence.

Pride was the fault against which Mother Barat incessantly waged war. There were peculiar temptations to self-esteem and contempt for others in that school at Paris, which was almost like a little court, where every circumstance of birth, of rank, of wealth, and the very names of its protectors, and even of its teachers, tended to foster vanity. A new mistress having been one day appointed, some of the children took it into their heads to notice and to point out the fact that she was not of noble birth. This was repeated to the Mother General. She instantly assembled the pupils, said a few energetic words on the respect due to those who are the representatives of God's authority, and concluded her address in the following manner. "Such is the law of the Lord, young ladies; but it is not, I suppose, in accordance with your way of thinking, as you want to have only high-born ladies for your mistresses. That being the case I have, for my own part,

nothing better to do than to take leave of you, for I am not at all highly born. Farewell, young ladies, you will not see me any more." This was quite a clap of thunder—the ringleaders burst into tears and fell on their knees, imploring Mother Barat to stay and forgive them.

The only thing that was never tolerated amongst the pupils was the remotest approach to vice. If a child in any of the houses was a dangerous companion to the others, the Mother General had no peace till she was sent away. It is impossible to describe with what care and in what an admirable manner she prepared the children for the sacraments. As the day of their first Communion approached, her feelings towards them amounted to a sort of reverence. On the eve of the feast of the Sacred Heart in 1827, after the little girls had been to confession and received absolution, they came to beg her forgiveness for all past faults, and asked her to kiss them. "Oh, no," she said, clasping her hands together, "pure as you are at this moment, it behoves no one but our Lord to make so free with you. I have no business to touch the vessels of the altar. I should be afraid of polluting them."

The most fervent of the pupils were enrolled in the Congregation of Children of Mary, instituted almost at the same time as the house in Paris. It had its presidents, its laws, its festivals, its gradations, its privileges, above all, its duties, and for its end the promotion of religion, not only in the interior of the school, but in the world. Its members were instructed to exercise an apostleship in their respective families, chiefly by giving good example, the surest and most prudent way of gaining influence.

Thus were educated in Paris a generation of women, who, during the first half of this century rendered immense service to the cause of religion. Some of them exercising in a high position a powerful influence, and devoting their eminent talents to the establishment of institutions and

the organization of good works which are, even now, the strongest support of the Church in France. Others, in the secret privacy of home, belonged to that class of women of which the Scriptures say that their children rise up and called them blessed, and whose husbands praise them.

Whilst Mother Barat was thus labouring to advance the glory of God and the salvation of souls in the central house of her Society, she was pursuing earnestly an object of the highest importance to a religious body, and which it was most essential for the Sacred Heart to obtain, that is, the approbation of the Holy See—the union of her Society with the centre of Catholicity. Feeling that this approbation would be the greatest blessing which could befall her Congregation, and encouraged by the proofs of kindness which had been repeatedly given to it by the Holy Father, the Mother General solicited this great favour from Leo XII. Mother Bigeu, with two other nuns of the Sacred Heart, were sent to Rome on this business, and arrived there in the first days of December, 1825. The question of the approbation had been in the meantime submitted to the "Congregation charged with the Consultations of the Bishops and Regulars," and it had come to the following conclusion—"The Institute is deserving of commendation with simple vows under the obedience of the Ordinaries. The report having been presented to His Holiness during an audience on the 2nd of September 1825, the Holy Father vouchsafed to approve the decision of the Sacred Congregation."

This was what is commonly termed the "Laudatum," or Brief of Commendation. But though this approval filled the Mother General with gratitude and satisfied her faith, it did not entirely fulfil the object of withdrawing the Society from its somewhat precarious and dependent position. It was only a first step towards an end which

was still distant, for according to the ordinary course of proceeding, ten years generally intervened between the granting of the Lauda, and the formal approbation of the Church. The question was whether to press on the matter at once. What decided the question was a memorial address to the Sovereign Pontiff, written by the Mother General in her own clear, earnest, yet measured style, in which strong feeling and good sense were equally combined.

This document produced the required effect. On the same day that he perused it, Leo XII. named a commission to examine more closely the statutes submitted to him.

The greatest objection alleged against the Institute was the absence of inclosure. The primordial idea conceived by the Church with regard to religious orders of women was that of a cloistered life. The whole economy of monastic rules, all the grounds of solemn approbation and vows, had hitherto rested on inclosure as an indispensable condition. But, on the other hand, a strictly cloistered life seemed hardly compatible with an active apostleship and the work of education. There was reason to fear that the grating would restrain zealous action, and scare the minds of children. Mother Bigeu tried to explain this to the prelates of which the commission was composed.

One of the most antagonistic, Cardinal Bertazzoli, was satisfied with her explanations and said to her, "You will obtain your Brief of approbation, and as soon as it is possible. The Holy Father likes your work. He has told me so himself." Mgr. Marchetti, Archbishop of Ancyra, who was Secretary of the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, and most watchful over its customs, also lent ear to Mother Bigeu's representations, gave frequent tokens whilst she was speaking of his assent, and concluded the conference with these memorable words. "This is evidently the work of God for the times we live in. We

must beware of interfering with it." "God Himself," Mother Bigeu wrote, "thus became the Protector of our cause. The Holy Spirit has spoken to them all, and they have all declared for a pure and simple approbation."

Meantime, at Paris, the Mother General was blessing God and ardently praying for the final success of their suit. At last the decision was given. On the feast of the Sacred Heart the commission presented to the Holy Father the report of their labours, which he received in the most gracious manner. And on the day of her own feast, the festival of St. Mary Magdalen, Mother Barat received the happy news. Before her departure from Rome, Mother Bigeu solicited the honour of an audience of the Holy Father to express to His Holiness the gratitude of the Society. She was informed that he was coming on that very evening, the feast of St. Ignatius, to the Church of the Gesù, and that she would be admitted to kiss his feet in the sacristy. He spoke to her with the greatest kindness and gave his blessing, not only to her and her companions, but to the whole of her Society, and expressed his desire to see it increase and extend. After these words of the Pope, the expedition of the Brief was a mere affair of time, and the negotiators were able to depart. That very night Madame Bigeu started for Turin. The Mother General, however, hastened to summon her to Paris. The reason of this pressing recall was the convocation of the fourth General Council.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Fourth General Council.

1826.

THE fourth General Council of the Sacred Heart was opened in Paris on the feast of St. Michael, 1826. The first object of its sitting was the promulgation of the definitive Statutes of the Society. The decree of the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars had modified in a slight degree the government of the Society. The office of an ecclesiastical Superior General was suppressed, and the nomination of a Cardinal Protector substituted in its place.

Secondly, the absence of complete inclosure being an obstacle to solemn vows, this deficiency was supplied by a vow of perseverance or stability, from which the Pope alone can dispense. "Our approbation," Mother Barat explained to her daughters, "is of the same description as that of the Jesuits. It is without a parallel for an order of women not cloistered."

She gave notice of these changes, and some other new and stringent regulations which the Council made with regard to simplicity and poverty.

Works of charity were also taken in hand by the Councillors. The house of Paris had not yet opened a poor school. The Council established one. The privilege of assisting and instructing those poor children became for the pupils one of the highest and most coveted rewards. Thus they were trained to the practice of charity, the

greatest honour and the first duty of Christian women. Several of the scholars adopted poor children, and watched over them like little mothers; and then, in accordance with a custom as old as the Society, the Council ordained that on the days when the poor children made their first Communion, the young ladies were to wait upon them in their school-rooms.

On the 21st of November, the anniversary of the first consecration of the Society, the Mothers of the Council went into retreat, and Father Varin gave them the Exercises in a manner which confirmed them all in the vital spirit of the Sacred Heart.

The Council was prolonging its sittings in expectation of the Papal Brief, and in the meantime its attention was directed to the consideration of some new foundations. At Lille an establishment was proposed, and a great number of pupils expected from Belgium. Mother Barat interrupted the course of the sittings, and went there at the beginning of 1827. She was received in the house of one of the former pupils of the school at Amiens, Caroline de Beauffort, Comtesse de la Grandville, who proved a remarkable instance of the apostleship carried on in the world by the children of the Sacred Heart. Thanks to this devoted friend, the foundation at Lille met with no obstacles.

Another member of the Council was sent soon afterwards to begin a house of the Sacred Heart at Lyons. The Comtesse de la Barmondière, one of those brave woman who after seeing their relatives perish on the scaffold, devoted their lives and their means to the support of religion during the Revolution, had continued since peace was restored to heal the wounds and repair the havoc of those evil days. She had restored the Seminary of St. Irenæus, founded two hospitals for incurables, and an asylum for penitents, re-established the Carmelite Monastery

and that of the Visitation, and, moreover, founded several orphanages and a house of Fathers of Christian Doctrine. As a crowning work of zeal, she determined to establish and endow a school expressly intended for the daughters of noble families reduced to poverty by the Revolution, and to intrust this Institution to the Order of the Sacred Heart. Mother Barat entered readily into this generous-hearted woman's intentions, and promised to give to that house one of the best of her subjects, the holy Mother Geoffroy.

Meanwhile the Council received tidings that the Sacred Heart was pursuing its mission in the New World, amidst incredible labours and sufferings. In the year 1825 a house was founded at St. Michel, not far from New Orleans, and a numerous school promised to make this establishment an American Hotel Biron. In 1827, a rich Catholic of St. Louis offered Mother Duchesne for an orphanage a house situated on the heights above the Mississippi, the solitude of which, and its position, commanding a magnificent view, reminded her of her beloved Sainte Marie-d'en-Haut. The Mother General gladly authorized her to accept this work of charity.

The Papal Brief, signed on the 22nd of December, 1826, arrived in France in February, 1827, and was received by the Council with the deepest joy and gratitude. Before it separated, it had to consider whether the Society should request to be submitted to the official authorization of the State. Mother Barat's opinion was in favour of the measure, and the Council came at last to the same conclusion. The application was made, and in April, 1827, a royal decree recognized the legal existence of the Society of the Sacred Heart. On the 16th of the same month, after the Council had been closed, all the Mother Assistants and Councillors made the vow of stability. Thanks to this act what had been a resolution was now a profession, and from a virtue

became a state of life. Whilst these important matters were transacting two deaths occurred, which caused deep grief to the Mother General. M. de Lamarche, that great servant of God and devoted friend of her Institute, whose prayers had doubtless hastened a development which he had ardently desired, was seized with an apoplectic fit just after the close of the Council, and expired in May, 1827. Then Mother Bigeu, who had so efficiently worked to obtain the approbation of the Society at Rome, and found strength, though very feeble, to go through all the fatigue that labour entailed, soon after her return to France gave tokens of failing health. On her way to Paris she stopped, amongst other places, at the house of Bordeaux, where she found the Superior, Mother Cécile Camille, at the last extremity. This saintly nun made the vow of stability in Mother Bigeu's hands. It almost seemed as if these two chosen souls had met to aid each other in their preparation for Heaven. After witnessing, as she said, the death of a saint who had exclaimed, when told that her pulse had all but ceased to beat, "Oh, I am so glad," Mother Bigeu arrived at Paris only to lie down on a bed of sickness, and to give the most edifying examples of religious virtue in suffering and joy in leaving earth.

Mother Barat felt so deeply the death of this venerable friend, that she secluded herself for ten days even from her own community, pouring forth in solitude her soul in God's presence, and finding strength in Him to bear this sharp trial. She had lost one of her chief supports and advisers; but the loss for her Society of one so specially gifted for its work, she thought of even more than of her own grief.

Since the beginning of the year 1821, about twenty novices had been living in the out-buildings of the Hotel Biron. Mother Barat had taken up her abode there, in the midst of her daughters, leaving the school to Madame Eugénie de Gramont. "We have both a great deal to do,"

she wrote, "Mother Eugénie in her mansion, and her Superior in the stables." When Mother Deshayes went to Amiens, the novitiate remained in the hands of Mother Barat. It had then, and it has always retained the appearance of a large family of Sisters of every rank and of every country. Wherever they came from, in the Sacred Heart they were all united. But strange and varied were the ways which had led them to this vocation. Some of them had already made a previous experience of the religious life. Others had been snatched, as it were, from the world by the sudden action of grace. Broken-hearted but generous parents not seldom brought themselves their children to the feet of our Lord. In some cases it was in the midst of the world, and a long experience of its trials, that a devotion had slowly ripened. Sorrows and disappointments had driven some of these chosen children of God into port, whilst others had been gathered under shelter before a single storm had swept their path. From the four quarters of the globe the Sacred Heart of Jesus was calling His spouses. The history of one of the novices, gathered, as it were, from afar, is so interesting, and her subsequent life so closely connected with Mother Barat's, that we cannot refrain from relating it. This young girl was only known at first in the novitiate under the name of Elizabeth. It was, however, soon discovered that she was a daughter of the House of Galitzin, one of the most high in favour at the Court of Russia. Her conversion, and her vocation to the Sacred Heart, had been chiefly owing, under God, to Father Rozaven. For two years the Mother General had been training this, her future daughter, by a series of letters, written to St. Petersburgh.

The childhood of this remarkable convert had not been happy. Her father had died when she was an infant. Her mother loved her, but treated her harshly. She had been continually beaten by her teachers, so as to be sometimes

covered with bruises, and she owned herself, in after years, that this barbarous education had made her hard, irritable, and obstinate. She was brought up in the Russian schism. Her mother was a Catholic, but it was only at the age of sixteen that Elizabeth was told this terrible secret. She was astounded, and vowed an implacable hatred to the Catholic Church, and especially to the Jesuits, who then had a house in St. Petersburgh. This vow, or oath, she wrote down in a fit of anger, and for four years running there was not a day that she did not renew it, morning and evening, before God. But in spite of this blind fury, as she herself called it, Elizabeth was right-hearted, good, and innocent. Her conscience was delicate, her mind aspired to high things, and her character earnest and generous. She was very fond of going to the play, but deprived herself of it from conscientious motives. At the age of eighteen she conceived a very ardent attachment which she kept a profound secret. It cost her many secret tears, but she never revealed it by word or by look. God promises to make Himself known to the pure of heart, and hers was such then and always.

She went one day into a Catholic Church for the funeral service of a venerable priest who had been her Italian master. No sooner had she entered the chapel than she felt as if an interior voice was saying to her, "You hate the Catholic religion, but you will belong to it." She burst into tears, and wept a long time without being able to account for her emotion. They flowed, those tears, as St. Augustine's had done of yore in the garden at Milan. From that time forward Elizabeth's struggles with grace began. During some months which she spent at a country house near St. Petersburgh she practised severe penances, fasted and prayed, rose in the middle of the night, and slept on the bare ground. On the one hand powerfully attracted to religion, on the other nature and youth rebelling against

these inspirations. She was a Catholic in heart, but with her mind still biassed by error, and obstinately shrouded in invincible prejudices. On her return to town she heard of the conversion of one of her relations. Great was her anger at this news. Then tears came to her relief, and when in the evening she knelt down to say her prayers, for the first time her lips refused to utter her vow of hatred to Catholicism. She spent the night in meditating on the claims of the Roman Church, and the strength of conviction which her mind arrived at during those hours was so complete that nothing she subsequently read or heard could add to it. The work was done. On the next day she threw herself into her mother's arms, and asked immediately to see Father Rozaven, in order to make her confession and be received into the Church, "even at the risk," she said, "of losing her fortune, her friends, and her country." The mother and child wept together, and eight days afterwards Elizabeth received Communion at the Mass of this saintly Father, who two months and a half later was expelled from St. Petersburgh, with all his companions, on the icy cold night of the 21st of December, 1815.

It was in vain that a marriage was proposed to Elizabeth with a young, clever, and pious Frenchman. Nothing could dissuade her from the intention she had formed of becoming a nun. She was one already in heart, and secretly leading the life of a religious in the world. At the Court parties she wore a hair-shirt under her ball dress, and gave to the poor her money, her time, and her labour. Father Rozaven was at Rome; she wrote to ask him to choose the Order she should join. "I thought," she said, "that to make this choice, an act of obedience would be what would best please our Lord. All I asked was that it should be a severe Order, and one employed in education. If," she added, "you could find one for me analogous to your own, it would make me very happy."

Eight years were, however, to elapse, eight years of trial, before Father Rozaven spoke to her of the Sacred Heart, and placed her in communication with Mother Barat. From that moment a correspondence began between them, "which was intended," as the Superior said, "to make her enter the novitiate the most humble, obedient, and united to God of her novices." The only difficulty, indeed, was to restrain her ardour for all holy exercises, works of charity, and especially for penitential practices.

Elizabeth Galitzin was thirty years of age before her mother gave her consent to her entrance into religion. She was to have no dowry, but this made no difficulty: a good vocation, a good spirit, and some degree of talent were all Mother Barat required. The daughter of a princely house joined the Society with no more earthly goods as her portion than the poorest of the Lay-sisters. Her mother reluctantly took her to Metz, where she was clothed in the religious habit in 1826, and in 1827 the Mother General summoned her to Paris. The new novice was ready for every privation; gay, good-humoured, full of kindness during the recreations, and perfectly obedient.

The devoted attachment which Mother Barat inspired gave her an unbounded influence over the souls she was training for God. They used to say of her that she was the humblest and least formidable of all the nuns; that the youngest novice could talk to her as easily as to any other Sister. Often in the summer during the recreations she gathered her daughters around her under the trees or on a green bank in the garden. Her conversation was simple, animated, clever, and full of charm. She did not approve of stiffness and of nuns being silent, morose, reserved, and always afraid of committing themselves. She used to declare that the first rule of the house was "not to bore any one," and quoted what St. Theresa said when visiting a convent where the Sisters thought it a counsel of perfection

never to say anything that could be thought clever. "Good heavens," she exclaimed, "what will become of us if such a principle is adopted in our little monasteries. The charm of the love of Christ would vanish. It is quite enough to be by nature silly without trying to be so supernaturally."

When she had put every one at her ease, then the Mother General often addressed to her daughters the most admirable instructions. Especially when she spoke of our Lord her rapid and eloquent language carried away the hearts of her hearers. She possessed a singular talent for applying the sacred teachings of the Holy Scriptures, and excited in the novices a spirit of unbounded generosity. "The Society wants saints," she used to say. "If you could only know what God asks of us!"

It was always an effort to the Mother General to leave her novitiate; but finding herself obliged to make long absences, she sent for Mother Desmarquest and appointed her Mistress of Novices in Paris. For forty years this holy woman was her most efficient cooperator in this important work.

In 1827 the political aspect of affairs in France became very threatening for religion. The Jesuits, as always happens, were honoured by the first volley of attack, and the name of the Sacred Heart was as hateful to the Revolutionists as that of the Society of Jesus. The dispersion of the sons of St. Ignatius seemed to presage a similar fate for Mother Barat's daughters. She felt more than ever that God alone could save His people, and the cry of her soul was still, "Oh, how near we must keep to our Lord! Oh, how much Jesus wants us to be saints!" Her courage rose in proportion to her fears. She exhorted her children not only to rest on the Sacred Heart, but to attach themselves to the Cross. Her cross was soon increased by the course of events. The Decrees of the 16th of June deprived the Church of the liberty of teaching, created the

monopoly of the University, banished the Jesuits from all their seminaries and colleges in France, restricted all ecclesiastical teaching to the studies strictly necessary for clerical students, reduced to twenty thousand the number of pupils conceded to the seminaries, and went so far as to exact from every ecclesiastical professor a declaration that he did not belong to any congregation unrecognized by the State.

Five days after the passing of these measures, petitions against the Jesuits solicited their expulsion. On the 19th of June a new enactment on the Press abolished the law of censure relative to newspapers and political writings, and abandoned public opinion to the Revolutionists. All good influences had been stopped, and all evil ones were let loose, without check or restraint.

Whilst the Chamber was discussing these persecuting laws, the feast of the Sacred Heart was being celebrated in the house at Paris with even more than usual solemnity. Undeterred by the aspect of public affairs, nine novices consecrated themselves to our Lord on that day. Mother Barat looked to the foundations in foreign countries as future asylums for her Society if banished from France. Rome especially stood foremost in her hopes and desires, and a powerful protector at that time opened the way to it.

Mgr. Lambruschini, Papal Nuncio at Paris, had conceived a high opinion of the Nuns of the Sacred Heart; and when the Sovereign Pontiff, Leo XII., informed the Nuncio that he wished a school to be founded for the education of the daughters of the Roman nobility, Mgr. Lambruschini immediately urged the Mother General to send to Rome a colony of her daughters. One of the most beautiful spots of the Eternal City was already chosen for this establishment.

The Convent and the Church of the Trinità dei Monti stands on the summit of the Pincio, by the side of the Villa Médici. It is surrounded with trees, and commands a

magnificent and complete view of Rome. Ever since the days of Charles VIII. France had maintained possession of the convent, and the Hermits of St. Francis of Paula the enjoyment of it. But in 1828, the community having dwindled down to a single monk, Leo XII. requested the French Government to make over this foundation to the Order of the Sacred Heart for a young ladies' school.

A letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Comte de la Ferronnays, dated February 9, 1828, announced to the Nuncio that the Pope's desire was acceded to. His Holiness had also expressed his wish that some of the best teachers in the Order should be selected for Rome. Madame Armande de Causans, Superior of the house at Turin, was accordingly named to this important post. Accompanied by two nuns from the same community, she arrived in the Eternal City on the 28th of May, 1828, and took formal possession of the Convent of the Trinità dei Monti.

At the time when this important work was going on Mother Barat was ill and often confined to her bed by an intermittent fever. She took pains to disclaim any share in it, and wrote to Mother de Causans that she would be the foundation-stone of the Roman house. In a letter to another Superior she said: "I am writing at this moment to the Sovereign Pontiff, but this correspondence does not make me forget the beautiful cow you have promised to give me. If I had been left in my proper place, such would have been my only cares." If she reckoned herself as nothing in the success of the new foundation, others more justly appreciated her share in it. Special graces are never granted unless purchased by suffering, and on her sick bed she had doubtless drawn blessings on those she employed and on her whole Society. Three nuns were not sufficient for the Roman foundation, and shortly after Madame de Causan's establishment at

the Trinità dei Monti, Mother de Charbonnel, with twelve more Sisters, from the houses of Paris and Turin, amongst whom was Elizabeth Galitzin, were despatched to reinforce her staff. Mother Barat's zeal, which seemed to keep pace with the increasing activity of evil influence, was at that same moment striving to stimulate the progress of her Society in America. At Fleurissant, Grand Coteau, and St. Michel, her daughters were teaching Catholics to love Jesus and His Sacred Heart. Protestant parents said they wished their daughters to be of the religion which made the nuns so amiable, and a school of little Indian children and classes for her dear mulattoes filled Mother Duchesne with hope. A colony of Jesuit Fathers had settled at St. Charles, the place where the Sacred Heart had first begun to work and which had been abandoned with deep regret. It had now become the head-quarters of missionary enterprise, and the American Sisters pressed to be allowed to return to the scene of their former labours. Mother Barat accepted the proposal, and amidst much poverty an immense deal of spiritual good was effected in that place.

In France the Sacred Heart was gaining ground in spite of all the obstacles in its way. Foundations were made in 1829 at Perpignan and Avignon. That year was marked by the holy deaths of many members of the Society. The sight of their companions, some of them in the flower of their age, leaving this world with unutterable peace and joy and the distate of life, which is apt to arise in times of trial, awakened a longing for death amongst her nuns, which rather alarmed Mother Barat. She had to tell them that she did not like that wish; that to live and to suffer to gain souls is more generous than to desire to die for the sake of one's own happiness.

The Mother General's desire of suffering was, in her own case, fulfilled. In the middle of May, 1829, she met with

a fall, which had severe consequences, and it was feared at one moment that the injured foot would have to be amputated. The most complete inaction was insisted upon, a hard trial to so ardent and active a nature. For a long time she did not leave her bed or a sort of basket couch, which a Sister moved about. It was in this state that Mother Barat was about to go through the days of the approaching Revolution.

In the meantime princes of the Church and royal personages frequented the Sacred Heart. Mgr. de Quélen, the Dauphiness, the Duchesse de Berry, and even the Queen of Naples, came to the convent to ask for prayers for the country. Mother Barat did not appear. She made, on these occasions, her prostrate condition an excuse for withdrawing into solitary communion with God. "I avoid as much as possible," she told Mother Duchesne, "the great people we live among. I often think, when I feel weary, of your silent woods and the banks of the Mississippi. Shall I never see them?"

Driven in a wheel-chair along the garden walks, and followed by the pet lamb which eat out of her hand, Mother Barat ascribed her helpless state to what she called her defects, and often thanked God for it. "He knows well what I require," she used to say to her novices: "I was too active, and He makes me atone for it." In the spring she tried to walk a little on crutches; but was still so weak that the nuns were afraid of her falling. "Oh, no," she would answer in her sweet and playful manner. "How could I fall when you all surround me? It is indeed the case to say that God has given charge to His angels concerning me, lest I hurt my foot against a stone."

The only wish she still entertained is thus expressed in a letter to Mother Duchesne: "What a consolation it would be to meet again once in this world before we die! Alas! my dear daughter, I hardly know how I can indulge

in such thoughts, infirm as I am, always lying on a couch, and unable to walk a step." This was written on the 2nd of July, 1830. Three weeks afterwards the Revolution, which overthrew Charles X. and placed Louis Philippe on the throne, had changed the whole aspect of affairs in France.

The summer of 1830 had begun under the most promising circumstances for the Order, and especially for the Paris house. It had in its school one hundred and fifty young girls, fifty novices training under its roof, and between fifteen and twenty postulants seeking admission. On the 11th of July a solemn *Te Deum* was sung in its chapel for the conquest of Algiers. The feast of St. Mary Magdalene was celebrated with more splendour than ever. The Mother General no longer objected to the homage which her children thus paid her, and said, "Those compliments do not annoy me now: I look up higher, and offer them to her who was the first adorer of the Heart of Jesus."

That day was a whole holiday. When Father Varin came he tried to speak cheerfully, as was his wont, but soon he abruptly said: "Do you know, my children, that you must prepare yourselves for the uproar which is threatening you?" "What uproar do you mean, Father?" "A most terrible uproar about to be raised;" and then, half in jest and half in earnest, he added, "What would you say if you were sent one of those days to the scaffold?" The novices glanced at each other, and the Father went on to say, "Well, if you hear of this uproar, be glad of it; and if you are threatened with suffering, rejoice. If the tumult outside your doors force its way into your house, take refuge in the Heart of Jesus; shut the gates of that holy shelter, and abide in peace. If I can, I shall come to you, but it will only be to repeat again what I am always saying—courage, confidence, joy, and always gladness of

heart in Jesus Christ." "But shall we have time to make our vows?" some of them asked. "Yes, you will," Father Varin replied. The novices hastened to relate to the Mother General, who was kept in bed by the wound in her foot, what Father Varin had said. She congratulated them on their ardour for martyrdom, but at the same time added that it would not prevent her taking measures to preserve them from it.

Three days afterwards the decrees of July appeared. Mother Barat urged every one about her to redouble their prayers. On the 27th an insurrection was organized in the Faubourg St. Antoine. Some of the parents came to fetch away their children; others sent her word that they were hastening to St. Cloud, where the King was staying. On the 28th the inhabitants of Paris were awakened by the sound of the cannon. In her helpless condition the Mother General could not be of any use to her community, and at a critical moment it would have been impossible to remove her. She was their principal treasure, and the Council determined to place her in safety. She submitted to their determination, and consented to go to Conflans, where Mother de Gramont, who was very much out of health, had been for some time residing in a little house belonging to Mgr. de Quélen, with one companion, Madame de Constantin. This Sister, a relation of the famous Count de Maistre, was gifted with that readiness of mind which is of so much use in moments of difficulty. Sister Rosalie, a Lay-sister from the novitiate, accompanied Mother Barat, and her nephew Stanislaus offered to escort them. They reached in safety the place of their destination, Conflans, the promised land of the Sacred Heart, the future novitiate of the Society. God willed that the field where such a rich harvest was to be one day gathered, should begin by being watered with Mother Barat's tears.

The house where she had taken refuge stood on the

declivity of a hill, which separates the Seine from the village of Charenton, between the little Seminary and the residence of the Archbishop. It was a very poor abode, which had remained for twenty years uninhabited. From the upper window Mother Barat could have seen the lights of the tumultuous city from whence she had fled.

Her companions and herself spent the evening in anxiety and a sleepless night in prayer. At each sound that roused their fears they exclaimed, "O God, save the Church! O Lord, protect the lives of Thy servants!" On the morrow, the 28th of July, the nuns found that they were alone in that spot. The palace of the Archbishop and the little Seminary had both been evacuated during the hours of darkness. They could not but feel alarmed; and at about two o'clock in the afternoon discordant vociferations indicated the approach of a hideous band of insurgents, who surrounded the Seminary and threatened to burn it down. Dreadful blasphemies and cries of "Death to the priests!" rent the air. It was the school of veterinary surgeons who thus evinced their patriotic appreciation of liberty and fraternity.

God preserved His consecrated spouses; but they had witnessed this frightful scene, and found it impossible to remain in such a well-known locality. Sister de Constantin and Sister Rosalie took off their religious habits, and went to seek a refuge for their sick Mother. Mother Barat could not help laughing when she saw them dressed like Paris women of the labouring classes. Laying her hand on their heads, she blessed them, and said, "Go, my poor children; find us a shelter, and may God be with you."

In the village, in Charenton, and Les Carrières, they wandered in search of a lodging for their Mother, and met with many a Bethlehem-like refusal, as Mother de Constantin expressed it. At last, in the evening, after many fruitless expeditions, they had the happiness of finding a hospitable

lady, Madame Saladin, who generously placed at the disposal of the little community an apartment in her house.

That evening, and the ensuing day and night, seemed interminable to Mother Barat. The dismal sound of the tocsin and of the firing, and the booming of the cannon, filled her with anguish. What was the fate of her nuns? What was happening to the children in the midst of these horrors? It was only on the 30th that a gardener from the Hotel Biron made his way to her retreat, and gave her news of her community.

The insurrection had succeeded, and there was no longer a King of France. Barricades had been raised just under the windows of the Sacred Heart. At one moment the insurgents scaled the walls and rushed into the garden. A shower of balls assailed them, and a desperate fight between the Swiss Guards of the Rue de Babylone and the Revolutionists ensued. The last white flag unfurled fell in that encounter; but the house of the Sacred Heart remained unscathed, preserved by the prayers unceasingly put up throughout the day and the night. At the height of the danger one of the former pupils ran breathlessly into the house, dressed as a peasant girl, and exclaiming, "Oh, do give me news of Madame Barat and all at the Sacred Heart." This was Mdlle. Annette de la Rochejaquelein, who had rushed through the streets in the midst of the flying balls, to come and help, or suffer with her dear teachers.

At last the road was free, and Madame Barat was able to hire a poor vehicle in which she and the Sisters drove into Paris, all of them wearing common apparel. Near the city a citizen, rather the worse for liquor, jumped upon the box and placed himself by the side of the coachman and Sister Rosalie. The loud and absurd patriotic demonstrations which this partisan of constitutional government carried on, protected his companions from any suspicion of

anti-Liberalism. At last they all arrived at the Boulevard des Invalides, and the Mother General had to be lifted over the barricades by this strange fellow-traveller, and to hobble on crutches through the line of bivouacs where the heroes of July were celebrating, by drunken orgies, their recent victory.

On arriving at the Hotel Biron she could only utter the word "courage," and then went into the chapel. It was St. Ignatius' feast-day, and Benediction was given, but there was no singing. The prayers of the Church were recited in a low voice. When the priest came to the words *Domine salvum*, he could not restrain his tears.

The meaning and the drift of this Revolution seemed at that moment a problem. It was impossible to foresee what effect it would have on the fate of the Sacred Heart.

On the following day, the 1st of August, which was Sunday, a man in a great coat, and wearing in his button-hole the indispensable tricoloured cockade, walked into the novitiate. It was impossible for the nuns not to laugh when they recognized Father Varin. The first words he said were, *Ita Pater*, and then, "My children, how good God is," with that faith of his which no adverse events could shake. He told the nuns that the Revolution would prove in the end an advantage to their Society, by purifying it from all worldly elements. "As to you," he added, "that merciful God Who has protected you through these perilous days, will continue to preserve you, even if a miracle were required for that purpose. Courage, then, and confidence. If you are faithful to God, He will be faithful to you."

That was the best watchword for the present and the future. Eight days afterwards, Mother Barat explained it to her daughters with great strength and energy. Her legitimate attachment to the banished dynasty was well known; but, wisely severing the cause of religion from that of royalty, she spoke as follows: "Monarchy has fallen,

but not the Church. The Church is immortal, and it is to her you cling, my dear children. Do not, then, be afraid. I have apprehended for you the dangers of prosperity, but I am not afraid of persecution." She added that a long and severe struggle was beginning, the struggle of the latter days; that they would take part in it; but that, for the present, not a hair of their heads would fall to the ground. Her daughters listened to her with admiration. One of them tells us that her words were worthy of the first days of the martyrs.

But notwithstanding her unshaken confidence, it was the duty of the Superior to provide for the safety of her novices. She told them that they were to be dispersed and sent in small detachments to the different houses of the Society, until a shelter was found for the whole novitiate far from the scene of strife, and that she was going to leave them in order to seek for such a refuge. Mother de Marbeuf and Mother Louise de Varax were left at the head of the house, and the Mother General took leave of her community. One of her last injunctions was, "My dear children, however small may be your number, do not give up the perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Our safety will be in prayer."

She took with her Mother Eugénie de Gramont, and left Paris on the 10th of August. "Everything is broken up for us," she wrote to America: "I go away with our Mothers—crippled as I am I must travel, where, I cannot tell."

In the first instance she accepted the invitation of the Marquis Theodore de Nicolay, one of the greatest friends of the Society, who was urging her to come to Switzerland and await there some Providential indication as to her future abode. His two eldest daughters had been at the school of the Rue de Varenne, which had given him opportunities of appreciating the merits of the Mother General. Immediately after the Revolution of July he had left France and

retired to his Château de Givisiers, near Friburg, where his sons were at the Jesuit College. It was there that he urged Mother Barat to come, giving her hopes that in that quiet neighbourhood she would be able to find a home for her novitiate. Mother de Charbonnel preceded her Superior, and after many researches, in which the Marquis assisted her, she chose a small country house called Montet, half way between Estavayer and Payerne, and about four leagues from Friburg. During the time required for the erection of additional buildings she proposed to rent the Château de Middes, which was close to it. The affair was to be concluded when the Mother General arrived. She was travelling slowly across France, stopping at Autun, Lyons, Chambéry, and then for some weeks at Aix in Savoy, where she had been ordered to take the baths for the cure of her foot. It was only in the middle of October that she and Madame de Gramont arrived at Givisiers. Montet was bought and Middes taken at once.

The family of Nicolay have retained the most cherished recollections of the weeks which the Mother General spent in their house. It was like an apparition of the cloister in the midst of the world. The scattered elements of the Society, which the Revolution of July had dispersed, met in that rural abode. Amongst the Marquis de Nicolay's visitors were several archbishops and bishops banished from their sees, a number of excellent and eminent priests and members of religious orders. Many distinguished professors of the College of Friburg, and other pious laymen. Mother Barat, in the midst of this remarkable concourse of eminent persons, vainly tried to escape observation. Her conversational powers placed her on a level with the highest intellects, and enabled her to discuss every sort of subject, whilst the charm of her sanctity won everybody's heart. In the secular dress which she and her companions were still wearing, the Mother General used to sit wrapped up in her

shawl in a corner of the room by the side of her hostess, with her needlework in her hand, joining in the conversation, and imperceptibly introducing into it holy topics. The Marquis and his wife venerated her as a saint. The servants were devoted to her, the peasants used to point out to each other on Sundays the lady they saw at church, whom they called the Saint of the Château. Even the children knelt down to ask her blessing. Those of the family, young as some of them were, could hardly keep away from her, so strongly were they attracted by that intuitive perception of sanctity which belongs to childhood. The boys considered it a privilege to bring her a chair, to carry her crutches, or to lead her to a seat. The elder girls sat at her feet, and thus conceived early desires of the religious life. Their father looked upon her residence under his roof as the greatest of blessings, and said to his family, "We must make it last as long as possible."

On the 10th of November the first detachment of novices arrived at Middes, and Mother Barat then took up her abode there. The house was barely large enough to lodge twenty-four persons. The same room served for a chapel and a community-room. A little sanctuary was partitioned off, where, for want of a ciborium, the Blessed Sacrament was continually exposed in a monstrance covered with a veil.

As inclosure was impossible in a place open on every side, the novices took long walks over the mountains, amongst the rocks and in the snow, and visited churches, where their rest was to adore our Lord in His solitary tabernacles. They soon won the hearts of the inhabitants, who had been at first very much prejudiced against that France which in the days of July had killed and maimed their sons, those brave Swiss soldiers who were called the lions of the King's guard. The fervour of the community in that quiet solitude was admirable. Their recreations

were spent in the Mother General's room, either by the side of the couch to which the state of her foot confined her, or round her bed. As a matter of precaution the secular habit continued to be worn, which was a hard trial to the nuns. Great was their joy when, on St. Andrew's feast, the Superior gave back the veil to her novices, and with her own hands placed it on their heads.

Hope was springing up again in Mother Barat's heart. But there are days when it is difficult to reckon on the morrow; an extraordinary agitation was everywhere prevailing. Swiss Radicalism, following the impulsion of France, was clamouring for the reform of the political constitutions of the cantons, in order to prepare the way for the persecution of the Church and the proscription of religious orders. In that case, what would become of Middes and Montet? The newspapers had already announced that an army of five hundred nuns, with their Superior General at their head, had invaded the territory. The civil authorities feigned to be alarmed, and the pious Bishop of Friburg, Mgr. Tobie Yenny, who was all in favour of the establishment at Montet, felt himself compelled under these circumstances to advise Mother Barat to try and secure an asylum in the Sardinian dominions, at Turin or at Chambéry, and to leave a country which exhibited so much uneasiness at the presence of a set of helpless women.

Mother de Gramont had retired to France, and on the 19th of December the Superior took leave of her dear hermits at Middes. The daughters remained in peaceful retirement in their humble abode; the Superior had to encounter a life of struggle. Soul, heart, and mind were about to be tried with renewed sufferings.

She had crossed the Lake of Geneva, and landed at Vevey on her way to Chambéry, when a fall on her disabled foot renewed all its pains, and aggravated the difficulties of her position. She had to return to Geneva in the first

instance, and when conveyed to Chambéry was ordered by Dr. Rey to remain completely still.

She did not complain. She thought of our Lord falling a second time under His Cross, of the trials of the Church, and united them with her own.

For six months after her departure from Middes her life was one of incessant and sharp suffering, the pain in her foot excruciating, and the news received from France alarming. Many of her houses were assailed, or at least threatened, by the Revolution. The school had been removed in the winter from Paris to Versailles, and from day to day was exposed to danger; Grenoble was menaced; at Perpignan the convent had been sacked, and the religious banished; Autun was on the point of being confiscated. "I am a diminutive Job," Mother Barat wrote; "every post brings me news of some fresh disaster. I shall perhaps become accustomed to it; but as it is, I can get no sleep."

But that fortitude which was so remarkable a feature in her character never failed amidst these trials. She was as attentive as ever to the least details of the government of her Order. Half sitting and half lying down, in a position which gave her the greatest pain if she moved ever so little, the brave and patient Mother General carried on a correspondence which made her familiar with all the affairs and almost all the members of the Society. Sometimes her sufferings were so violent that the pen dropped out of her hand; but no traces of it are apparent in these letters, and if they are marked by a peculiar characteristic, it is that of a lively and joyous love of our Lord.

In that state of inaction, which was more laborious to her than labour itself, Mother Barat's refreshment was to surround herself with children, especially the children of the poor, and contemplate God in the beauties of creation. At Chambéry she made a particular friendship with one of the little boys who served at Mass, whom she had found

stealing fruit in the garden. The reproof she gave him was the origin of their intimacy, and every morning she handed over to him her breakfast, while the Sister who brought out her meals was delighted at the Mother General's improved appetite.

In May, Dr. Rey sent her to the baths at Aix in Savoy, and thence she wrote: "I am resigned to spend a long month here, like Moses amidst the waters. To will what the Lord wills, is the only way to be at rest." There also she gathered around her the children of the house and the maid-servants, spoke to them of God, and made them presents, rosaries, and the little book called *Think well on it.* The windows of her apartment in Doctor Vidal's house overlooked a torrent, the noise of which she heard from her bed. She was often carried into the garden through which it flowed, and liked to watch its rapid course. It reminded her, she said, of the flow of time. "Only I do not make such a noise," she playfully added.

During an interval in the course of her baths, Mother Barat went to Grenoble, where her presence was greatly needed. Sainte Marie was no longer the flourishing school nor the peaceful solitude of Mother Duchesne's days. The house was almost empty, the town in a state of confusion. An incessant noise of drums, the loud singing of the *Marseillaise*, the planting of the tree of liberty and the cries of the mob brought back to Mother Barat in her cell the most sinister recollections of '93.

On her return to Chambéry she made a retreat; at the close of the exercises she wrote, "How many crosses still await us. But let us only rely with greater confidence on that Master Who has vanquished the world, and Who will sustain us." Her confidence was rewarded. The murmurs of war subsided, and Switzerland was appeased. Middes, which she had called her tottering castle became firmly established. She arrived there on the 16th of September;

her novices were expecting her, in order to take possession of Montet. That day was a festival for the village. As soon as she appeared, the church bells pealed forth a joyous welcome. Dr. Récamier, who was walking up the hill with Mother Barat, asked a peasant why they were ringing. "It is because the holy monk is coming," he answered. That was the name they gave her in that Alpine village. The Mother General visited the house, which could now accommodate about thirty nuns. It was beautifully situated at the foot of a lower range of the Alps, and at the entrance of so lovely and smiling a plain that it deserved its name of Swiss Italy. Magnificent trees incloistered as it were this little property; a valley, shaded by tall pine woods, seemed made for meditation. They called it La Thébaide. The Alpine glaciers bordered the horizon, and from the neighbouring heights the lakes of Morat, Neufchâtel, and Geneva could be seen glittering in the sunshine.

It was there that in the beginning of October, 1831, the nuns, the novices, and about a dozen children, whose parents had emigrated, took up their abode. Mothers de Charbonnel and Henriette Coppens governed together this little colony. Mother Barat took leave of them in the beginning of October. Her characteristic farewell to the novices was a comment on the words of St. Paul. "We must redeem the time, for the days are evil." On the 17th of the same month she arrived in Paris.

One great work the Mother General had accomplished, the preservation of the essence and hope of the Society, its novitiate. It was now her business to repair the breaches made by the Revolution; that was the great need of the time. She began by placing her daughters under the special patronage of Mary Immaculate. Devotion to the Mother of God she looked upon as the safeguard of her convents.

The course of new foundations had hardly been inter-

rupted by the recent political events. On the 21st of October, 1831, eight days only after her return to Paris, Mother Barat was informed that a very fervent austere little community, devoted to the Sacred Heart, had just been united to her Society. She had herself prepared, negotiated, and accepted this adhesion. In the year 1800 a pious girl at Annonay in the Ardéche, called Marie Meinier, who was kneeling one day in the church of the Penitents, which had formerly belonged to the Society of Jesus, received an intimation that at that moment a Society devoted to the Heart of Jesus was being founded, and at the same time a promise was made to her that a house of that Order would one day exist in her native town. A band of virgins had appeared to her wearing the habit, which as it happened was the one adopted by the Sacred Heart. Two other holy young women, touched by the same grace and enlightened in the same manner, began to live under a common rule. Hence arose a little community which devoted itself to the education of children in small schools. The Sacred Heart of Jesus was their great devotion. One of the holiest of them, Mother Augustine, had heard during her thanksgiving after Communion a voice which said to her: "My daughter, take root in the Heart of Jesus." Without understanding the full meaning of these words the infant community had consecrated itself in 1826 to that Divine Heart, had taken Its name, and endeavoured to acquire Its spirit. As soon as they heard of the Society established by Mother Barat they had no rest until they found it. This foundation was only a prelude to other works. On the 10th of November the Mother General, weak and infirm as she was, started on a long journey. She was going to strengthen those communities in the south which had been attacked or threatened by recent events. At Orleans and at Tours, in both of which towns she stopped, urgent requests were made to her for the establish-

ment of houses, but neither of them seemed to her ripe for a foundation.

At Chateauroux a third fall on the weak foot very nearly disabled her, but she persevered in her journey, and on approaching Lyons was met by the news that a terrible insurrection had broken out there. This obliged her to stop at Tarare.

The cannon was booming on the heights about Lyons. Forty thousand workmen thrown out of work, starving, and excited by the leaders of the revolutionary party, and the apostles of the Saint Simonian sect, were thronging the streets and vociferating: "Work or death." After a murderous conflict, the regular troops were driven out of the town, which remained abandoned to the victorious socialists. This was only a beginning of the obstacles which were to impede the course of Mother Barat's journey.

It was only on the 24th of December, after the victory obtained by Marshal Soult and the Duke of Orleans, that she was able to enter Lyons. Great excitement reigned there, and apocryphal prophecies were circulated, according to which the city was threatened at certain dates with dire calamities. Mother Barat deprecated these alarming rumours, and wrote to her daughters in Paris, "Peace seems entirely restored. The prophecies said that disturbances would begin again on the 15th, 16th, and 17th. They deceived credulous people, but not your Mother, who sticks to her *Credo.*"

There had existed for some time past at Lyons, under the name of Children of Mary, an association of former pupils of the Sacred Heart, which a certain number of persons of the town had joined. It was Mother Edmée Lhuillier, a niece of Father Druilhet, and Mistress General of the school in the Rue de Boissac, who had assembled and who directed them. She was like her uncle, a native of Orleans, and belonged to a pious and highly educated

family. Her gift of influence was remarkable, and she had taken for her motto Madame Barat's saying that "a religious of the Sacred Heart must be a link between souls and God." Still, at the time we are speaking of, her work was quite in its infancy, but Mother Barat's quick eye soon discerned what it might grow into with the blessing of God and under the patronage of the Blessed Virgin. She requested Father Druilhet to draw up for the Association the statutes by which it is still governed.

"To assist young girls and young women in the world to persevere in faith, piety, charity, and Christian modesty; to encourage them in the performance of all the duties of their condition, to secure for them spiritual assistance amidst the difficulties, and consolation under the sorrows and trials of life." Such was the object of this institution. According to the same statutes the exercise of prayer, the Word of God heard with fidelity, the regular frequentation of the sacraments, devotion to the Blessed Virgin, the maintenance of Christian friendships, and a holy combination for the accomplishment of works of charity were the means of securing their perseverance and procuring the glory of the adorable Heart of Jesus, and the Holy Heart of His Mother. This Society was to be under the patronage of the Immaculate Conception, its Council named by election; it had a Superior and an Ecclesiastical Director, its exercises of piety, its annual retreats, and meetings every month for work in common and for the relief of the poor. This was the plan of the Association of Children of Mary.

These rules once established, Mother Barat resolved to bring forward the little work, and began by securing for it the protection of the Archbishop of Lyons, who gave it one of his Vicars General as its Ecclesiastical Director. She was about to obtain for it the authorization of the Holy Father, and to constitute it on the same footing in all the houses of the Society.

On the 25th of March the Congregation was definitively constituted by the nomination of the principal officials. Mother Barat was absent, but her letters to them show what a large field of work she opened to the zeal of the Children of Mary. "How my heart rejoices in the thought of all the good which will result from this work! You have a wonderful mission, I am not afraid of calling it an apostolate, for you must be apostles in the midst of a perverted world."

Another work, that of retreats for ladies living in the world, naturally resulted from the Institution of the Children of Mary.

It was made a rule for all the houses of the Sacred Heart that every year a preacher of thoroughly apostolic zeal should be asked to give a retreat, to which the nuns were to invite persons living in the world, and especially the Children of Mary. Turin led the way in this great work, and Chambéry soon followed the example. Soon at Lyons, Grenoble, Paris, and then at Amiens, Poitiers, and Niort similar retreats were organized with equally beneficial results. Before long they were multiplied and generalized; and it would not be perhaps too much to say that scarcely any other of Mother Barat's works has done and still effects more lasting good.

On the day after the first preparatory meeting of the Children of Mary, the 12th of February, 1832, Mother Barat left Lyons, where she had remained about three months, and went to Avignon. Her daughters still occupied the mansion of the venerable Marquis de Vidaud; she came to arrange and expedite their removal to the old Carmelite Convent, which was at that time used as a storehouse. The little community was going on well, she wrote, in every sense of the word, and everything seemed hopeful; but the Superior's joy was soon overclouded.

It was at Avignon that she heard the news, which had

been apprehended for six months, that the cholera was in Paris. At the very same moment at Lille, at Besançon, at Beauvais, and at Amiens, the houses of the Sacred Heart saw it approaching their doors.

It swept away thousands of lives, and by Holy Week Paris was decimated. A few days afterwards Mother Barat had to announce to Mother Duchesne that one of the most intelligent and energetic of the leading spirits of that day had died of the prevailing contagion. "Oh, my dear Philippine, what terrible events! Your cousin, Casimir Périer, is dying. He was our hope, for he had at any rate a sound judgment. Pray for us that so many calamities may bring about our conversion." One of the last words of the expiring statesmen had been: "Return to Catholicism, or you are lost."

Those sad days called forth all the faith, self-devotion, and tenderness of Madame Barat's heart, the faith of a saint, the tenderness of a mother, the spirit of a victim. She looked anxiously every day for news of her absent children, and trembled as she opened the letters from her various houses. She placed them all under the protection of Our Lady of Sorrows, and told Mother Eugénie de Gramont to erect in her chapel an altar to St. Roch. All her communities and their scholars she urged to pray unremittingly. Great was the piety which reigned amongst them, especially in the house of Paris. Father Druilhet, visiting it one day at that time, could not help saying to the nuns: "Your door is marked with the blood of the Lamb, and the destroying angel will not strike you."

And, as it happened, during a month of unexampled mortality, it was a subject of general astonishment that the Sacred Heart had escaped the contagion. Mother Barat wrote: "Le Gros Caillou is half depopulated; but up to the present time our Sisters have remained unscathed."

The gratitude of the Mother General did not prove inactive. At the first appearance of the malady, which was decimating his flock, Mgr. de Quélen had thus written to the curés of Paris: "Let us be merciful, as our Heavenly Father is merciful, Who makes His sun to rise on the evil and the good. I know no other politics. They were those of St. Vincent of Paul, who in the midst of the factions which were tearing his country to pieces, answered in these words the questions put to him as to his opinions: 'I am for God and the poor.'" And the Archbishop, who had never ventured to appear in public since 1830, came out of his residence at the Sacred Heart and showed himself to his flock. At the head of his clergy, he went through the parts of the town most infected with the epidemic, he visited the hospitals, organized ambulances, and procured for the sick bodily relief as well as spiritual ministrations. Moreover, on the 23rd of April, he issued a pastoral in which he announced that he adopted the poor orphans whom the cholera was multiplying every day by hundreds in his diocese. He said in that letter: "I am Joseph, your brother, be not afraid, for it has happened by the will of God. . . . You thought evil against me, but God turned it into good that He might save many people."*

On the 27th of April, Mother Barat had just read this pastoral, which struck her "as worthy of St. Chrysostom, of Bishop Belzunce, and of St. Vincent of Paul." With a heart inflamed by those generous words she had communicated, and on leaving the altar was inspired with a desire which she immediately made known to Mother de Gramont: "This morning, my daughter, a thought came into my mind during my thanksgiving. Suppose we were to adopt twelve or fifteen little orphans of the cholera, who would be lodged, fed, and clothed at our expense, with the assistance of our pupils. What a beautiful work it would be at this moment."

* Genesis xlv.

The next day she again spoke of the subject. "I have been dreaming of our orphans. How pleased I should be if you could adopt them. I feel as if it would be such a protection, such a shield for us!"

This plan was communicated to the community and the school of the Hotel Biron, and was received as a Divine inspiration. Mother de Gramont wept for joy at the thought of it. Mother Barat corresponded with her on the subject, and arranged the details of the work of charity, so that in the month of June, on the very day of the feast of the Sacred Heart, the orphanage was installed in the house at Paris. Nor was this good deed unrewarded. That house continued to be preserved from the contagion, as is attested by the column and image of the Blessed Virgin erected in the garden in thanksgiving for this merciful exception. The houses in the provinces were likewise protected, and the words of St. Francis of Sales once more justified: "God will take care of the children of those who have taken care of the children of God." Meanwhile the Mother General continued the course of her visits in the towns of the South of France. From Avignon she went to Perpignan, where her daughters had been driven out of their convent. They had been obliged to take refuge for a while in private houses, and this had led to their being better known and appreciated. "They are indeed real nuns," people said with astonishment. An obscure abode was found for them in the Rue Saint Sauveur, where they had collected about twenty pupils. It was there that Mother Barat came to help, to cheer, and to encourage them with the hope of a better future.

Soon afterwards a negotiation which had long been pending obliged her to go to Aix-en-Provence. A pious woman in that town had a school which she proposed to make over to the Sacred Heart. The offer was not inviting. The house burthened with debt, and the pupils remarkable

for their insubordination, though they were in the main good-hearted girls. Mother Barat soon witnessed an instance of both these characteristics. After some unsuccessful negotiations she was about to take her departure, and in order to leave the house without attracting notice, she arranged to go during the time of Mass; but the girls heard the sound of the carriage, and in one minute they all rushed out of the chapel, leaving the priest and his server alone at the altar, ran to the door to stop the way, and surrounding the Mother General, cried and shouted: "We want to belong to the Sacred Heart. You shall not go. You shall be our Mother." In vain did Madame Barat try to get away. She had not power to resist the tears of children. The arrangement was concluded.

Meanwhile the health of the Mother General was fast improving; but her foot still remained in the same state, no remedies seemed to do it any good, and fears were entertained that she would never recover the use of it. Mother Barat disliked the idea of returning to the baths of Aix in Savoy, which were still recommended as a last resource. "It is not a place," she said, "for a religious." She had much more confidence in the prayers which her daughters were everywhere making for her, but she wished them only to ask for the cure and sanctification of her soul.

It was then that Mother de Limminghe, who came to Aix, proposed to her Superior to visit her house at Turin, where she could consult an eminent physician, enjoy a good climate, and have many fervent prayers said for her. Turin was also a first step towards Rome, where the Mother General had promised to go. Accordingly, on the 22nd of May they started together for Italy, where wonderful mercies awaited Mother Barat.

For the last ten years, the Order had made rapid strides, and now affliction patiently endured, and virtues confirmed by sacrifices, were about to bring it to what St. Paul calls the plenitude of Christ and the fulness of the perfect man.

CHAPTER IX.

Mother Barat at Turin and Rome.

1832.

On the 22nd of May, Mother Barat and her companion began their journey to Turin by the road to Nice. At the bridge of the Var, which was then the frontier of France, they were much surprised at being stopped as if they were suspected persons. Mother de Limminghe was taken to the military post, to the house of the Mayor, and to the office of the Sardinian Consul, escorted by an increasing crowd of children and idle people. In spite of all their explanations, it seemed likely that the two nuns would be detained. It was only after midnight that the Commissary of Police, touched by Mother Barat's gentle and open manner, consented to their departure. The reason of this was that the Duchesse de Berri had just landed in France, and orders having been sent to all the frontiers to arrest her in case of her appearance, the custom-house officers had done Mother de Limminghe the honour of taking her for the Princess.

The passage of the Colla di Tende, between Nice and Turin, was a very trying one in those days. The road, at first hemmed in between two walls of rock, led to the foot of a precipitous mountain, which it took several hours to cross. It was covered with snow at that moment, and the travellers had to ascend the steep acclivity at a foot's

pace. On reaching the summit they found that it would be impossible to accomplish the descent except in sledges. Twenty-two men, who had been sent on for the purpose, took off the wheels of the carriage and dragged it themselves on the snow with a fearful rapidity, amidst the rocks and along the edge of the precipices. Mother Barat, who could not put her foot to the ground, was obliged to remain inside the vehicle, whilst her companion walked, with the help of sticks, knee-deep in the snow. They had to hurry on, for the post-master, who acted as guide, declared that a storm was gathering, and it did indeed burst forth with fury just as they reached the valley. Mother Barat wrote on her arrival at Turin: "God and His good angels have greatly protected us during this dangerous journey; at last we have reached our place of shelter, well and in safety."

It was God's will that the house of Turin should prove the means of restoring new life to the Superior General. From the moment of her arrival she felt as if there were a peculiar spirit of holiness in the place—something that gave her an inexpressible feeling of peace and rest. The Convent of the Crucifix was indeed in every respect well calculated to gladden the eyes of a saint. Its Superior, Mother de Limminghe, was held in high esteem by all the Society, and was supposed to be favoured with singular lights and graces. Mother Barat rejoiced at the opportunity of holding intimate converse with so holy a soul.

It also happened that the spiritual director of this community was a religious whom she had particularly noticed in his childhood at Amiens. Most Catholics who have lived at Rome in recent years must have known and appreciated as a spiritual guide Father Philippe de Villefort. It was he that Mother Barat rejoiced to find at Turin. She says in a letter dated the 4th of June: "I go to confession here to Father de Villefort. I predicted to him when he was only twelve years of age that I should do so

some day. I have just fulfilled my prophecy, which made him smile. He is so serious, that this is a rare occurrence."

The Mother General felt herself in Paradise, and the only drawback to the joy of the community was her infirm state. They resolved to besiege Heaven with prayers, and during the first days of June a novena to Our Lady of Sorrows was begun. The pupils crowded round her altar with that simple faith which it seems as if God could never resist. So great was their confidence, that they wanted no medical assistance to be sought for; but Mother de Limminghe was afraid that this would be to tempt God, and the Chevalier Rossi, the surgeon of the Court, a learned and Christian practitioner, was sent for. He declared that there was in the foot of the Mother General a dislocation of the bones, which appeared to him incurable. Prayers continued, however, to be ardently poured forth, and in the middle of June, M. Rossi, without saying anything, attempted one day to operate on the foot. In one instant his skilful hand succeeded in resetting the bones, and a few douches, he declared, would complete the cure. But on the following day Mother Barat could already walk a few steps, and she wrote: "God be praised, I am saved from the baths! Thank our Lord and the Blessed Virgin. They work so many miracles in this country, where faith reigns in all its purity, and, I may add, in this house, where the Mother of God is so supereminently loved. One can see that she loves it in return, so great is the fervour and so many the gifts vouchsafed to it."

The doctor signed an attestation of this cure, in which he declared that he had been merely the instrument of Divine mercy.

A villa called the Casino, two miles and a half from Turin, had been given up to the religious of the Sacred Heart by their benefactress, the Marchesa di Barol. It became the favourite residence of the Mother General, who

thus describes it: "Nothing can be more secluded than this magnificent country house, where our nuns spend the summer with their pupils. There is not much land about it, but everything is beautiful, the buildings, the walks, the arrangement of the gardens, and the manner in which everything is cultivated. The alleys and the trees are finer than those of our house at Paris. They intersect lovely meadows watered by little streams. The conservatory is so immense that the former owner used sometimes to ride in it on horseback; the evergreens so numerous and so tall that I never remember to have seen any to be compared to them. It is a delightful solitude, the only sound we hear is the song of the nightingales. I purpose making my retreat here, and to stay over St. Mary Magdalen's day; it will be a happiness to spend her feast in a *Sainte-Baume.*"

Her residence and her retreat at Turin had matured in Mother Barat's mind a resolution of a practical nature and relative to her own sanctification. She intimated this project to Mother de Limminghe in the following manner: "I have something in store for you. Not a small burthen I can assure you, but with virtue the trial will be easier. I smile at the thought of it, so do not be afraid, and do not even think of it. It will be our secret." This secret she soon disclosed to her friend. The Mother General, who suffered from feeling that she was obliged to govern others and had no one herself to obey, determined to place herself under obedience to Mother de Limminghe for everything which concerned her personal conduct. Obedience was one of Madame Barat's dearest virtues, she looked upon it as one of the principal forms of humility and charity. "Be obedient even to folly," she had written a little before to one of her daughters. "Let that nail rivet you to the Cross. No other bond will unite you so closely to our Lord." It was accordingly decided that she would never

take any step regarding her own individual conduct without Mother de Limminghe's permission. We see this by her letters. She says: "When I am in doubt I consult you in spirit, I feel as if you answered me, and I go on." "I do all that you desire me as to prayer, rest, &c. I try to eat and to sleep, and I do so reasonably. Do not be anxious." Secretly she resolved that during the journey she was about to take, her dear directress should accompany her, so that she might act at every moment under obedience.

In spite of all her efforts to hide her virtues, Madame Barat's character inspired the deepest veneration to all who came in contact with her at Turin. The Marchesa di Barol, who ranks among the heroines of charity of that epoch, all but worshipped the Mother General, who likewise held that lady in the highest esteem. The Queen of Sardinia, Mary Theresa, the Duchess of Lucca, who was afterwards married to Charles II. of Parma, the young Maria Christina of Savoy, who was about to adorn the throne of Naples with the virtues of a saint, all sought out the servant of God and looked up to her with admiration.

Her reputation for wisdom and sanctity was so established in that country, that one day in the middle of August the lord of a neighbouring village and the parish priest brought to her a girl of twenty-five who was supposed to be endowed with supernatural gifts. She did not eat, drink, or sleep, prayed all night, wore on her head a crown of thorns, and also pretended to have received revelations from the Blessed Virgin, who, according to her statements, had ordered her to build a church on a mountain in that locality. She had begun accordingly to carry up stones to that spot. Mother Barat examined her with charity and prudence, she felt some misgivings about this saint, whose eyes, she said, were always bent on the ground, but whose tongue did not seem to be under equal restraint. At the end of the week the mystery was solved. When left alone

the fast of this girl was not only broken, but she drank even more than she ate. The proofs of her deception were overwhelming, but did not prevent some pious persons, and even religious, obstinately refusing to be convinced. "So much," as Mother Barat said, "are people inclined to believe what is extraordinary." Her own simple, submissive, and solid faith, preserved her from these sort of illusions. In answer to the account of some facts of this description, she wrote one day to Mother de Gramont: "I declare to you that I shall only believe in revelations when you write to me that you have had them yourself. In that case let me hear of them at once. But as it is, I am more incredulous than ever. That is all I can say."

Cured as she was, the Superior General felt it difficult to tear herself away from the house in Turin. The nuns wanted to keep Mother Barat, and the children quite worshipped her. A story is told of one of the young mistresses complaining to Mother Barat very seriously of the bad behaviour in church of two little culprits of four years of age. She laughed at her indignation, and on the following Sunday begged that the offenders might be placed on a seat just under her own stall. Elated at this honour, they mixed up with their prayers all sorts of childish gestures and playful pantomimes. Their mistress was on thorns, and twenty times thought of taking them out of church. She said so afterwards to the Mother General, who answered: "I don't see why. For my part, I feel as if those two babies were little lambs frisking at our Lord's feet. May they long remain in their sweet innocence."

Meanwhile, Mother Barat was preparing to start for Rome, where an important work awaited her—the establishment of the Roman Novitiate. She left Turin in the middle of October, 1832, taking with her Madame de Limminghe. They stopped at Loreto some hours, too short hours she thought, "for months would hardly have

sufficed to satisfy the devotion excited by the Holy House." On the 25th, they arrived at the Trinità dei Monti. But as, according to agreement, the Trinità was always to remain a French establishment, it was necessary to seek another abode for the Roman novices; the Convent of Santa Rufina was purchased for that purpose. Soon after the Mother's General's arrival, the novitiate was definitively established. She now received a first and special proof of Pope Gregory XVI.'s paternal kindness. Having accidentally scalded her foot, and being in consequence confined to her room, she was sitting gazing on the dome of St. Peter's, seen from the height of the Trinità dei Monti, and engrossed with the multitude of thoughts which it awakened in her mind, when she was told that the Holy Father, hearing of her arrival and of her accident, was coming up to give her his blessing. "I cannot describe to you," she wrote, "my feelings when I saw that venerable Pontiff enter the little room adjoining my cell. I could not master my emotion, but it affected me in a sweet manner, for I heard only words of kindness and sympathy." She tried to kneel down, but the Pope raised her up, and made her sit by his side. "I have greatly at heart the prosperity of such a useful, edifying, and *well governed* institute," he said, and uttered those last words with marked emphasis.

As soon as Mother Barat's scald was healed, she visited Santa Rufina. In the part of Rome beyond the Tiber, a little above the river, there is an old church, said to have been built on the site of the house inhabited in the third century by the Virgins Rufina and Secunda, who suffered martyrdom under Gallienus. In the first years of the seventeenth century, two pious pilgrims, Françoise Montieux, a Parisian, and Françoise de Gourcy, a native of Lorraine, obtained from Clement VIII. leave to form there, under the name of Ursuline Oblates, a Congregation devoted to the

instruction of children. The Order had, however, become all but extinct.

Gregory XVI. was anxious not to let the work of education perish with it, especially in that part of the city where fidelity to the Popes had been transmitted from father to son amidst the vigorous race of the old Sabines. It was principally with that view that he had given Santa Rufina to the Sacred Heart. The Mother General fully entered into his ideas, and wrote on the morrow of her first visit to that house: "It is a better one than I had been led to expect; with a little garden, which we can make, it will be tolerable. The court is fine, and a fountain plays in the centre, which adds to its beauty. Later on, it will do for a poor school and a second-class boarding-school, for if God blesses our novitiate, it will be established elsewhere."

Part of the house was left to the few remaining Oblates during their lifetime, with a pension for their support. Mother Barat paid them a visit, and wrote that they seemed very pious, and that their Superior gave her the idea of a saint. A still more delicate feeling of charity prompted her to be the first to call on two of her former daughters who had not acted kindly by her in past days, Madame Baudemont and Madame Copina. The first had been Superior, and the other Mistress of Novices at Amiens during the painful crisis which took place in that community. Having previously announced her visit in a courteous letter, she went on the 24th of November to that house of St. Denis fraught with such sad associations. About thirty scholars barely supported the two disconsolate mistresses. "They suffer," Mother Barat wrote, "and they suffer courageously. It was on that account that I wished to see them, and to show by my manner that I in nowise resent the past." She cordially embraced these ladies, spoke to them of the Mothers they had known in France, made delicate offers of assistance, and pressed them to come and see her. Touched

and delighted with her kindness, they called her their Mother and friend, and were quite cheered by her kind words and kind manner.

There had been a time, as she said herself, when the historical memories of Rome and the marvels of art contained within its walls would have moved to its very depths the soul of Mother Barat. Not one of them would have failed to interest her highly cultivated mind and ardent imagination. But now her thoughts soared higher, she was far otherwise impressed by the reminiscences of Christian Rome, and readily acceded to the Holy Father's suggestion that she should visit the principal monuments of its faith. Before the Confession of the Prince of the Apostles she poured forth fervent prayers for the Church. Another time she went to Santa Marie Maggiore, the Scala Santa, San Giovanni Laterano, Santa Croce in Gerusalemme, the Coliseum, the Forum, and the Mamertine prison. At the Scala Santa, as she was about to ascend it on her knees, she turned to her companions and said: "At each step I shall pray to our Lord for one of the houses of our Society." The sight of the Coliseum inspired her with an ardent desire for martyrdom. She kissed that soil, watered with the blood of the confessors of the faith, and could hardly tear herself away from the spot where the wild beasts tore in pieces the martyr St. Ignatius, and so many other generous followers of Christ. Soon she refused to leave the Trinità dei Monti, even for these holy excursions, but she was sought out in her retirement by a number of French families, driven out of France by political events or the cholera. A number of old friends of the Society, lay and clerical, visited her, and were all impressed by her modest sanctity.

In December, on the feast of St. John the Apostle, she gave the habit to ten postulants. Anxious to establish her daughters at Santa Rufina, but fearing that the house would

soon be insufficient, Mother Barat would have wished to add to it the buildings of an old adjacent monastery, which was used as a manufactory of tobacco. It was with the view of obtaining this concession that she presented herself on the 1st of February at the audience of the Holy Father. The request was refused, the Holy Father explaining in the kindest manner the obstacles which existed to this permission. Otherwise the Mother General was delighted with her audience. In the course of conversation the Marchesa Andosilla, who had accompanied her, said: "That the Superior ought to be chained to Rome." "No," the Pope replied. "The Generals of Orders must not be chained." This was an important remark, for it quieted one of Mother Barat's anxieties.

During Holy Week she was given by His Holiness the use of a little tribune, which opened on the Vatican. There she saw him humbly washing the feet of twelve poor pilgrims, and remarked his deep recollection. She could not look at him without emotion, and united her own prayers with those she hoped he was offering up for France. In speaking of the Mass celebrated on Easter Day by the Holy Father and of the Benediction, *Urbi et Orbi*, descending on forty thousand heads assembled in the square and the vicinity of St. Peter's, she expressed the deep feelings of faith which that sight awakened in her heart, but considered herself out of place in the midst of that crowd, and thought of the *Sepolte vive.*

Continual obstacles and interminable formalities had delayed the transfer of the novitiate to Santa Rufina. Mother Barat wrote: "Things go on in this country at a snail's pace. We Frenchwomen die of it. It needs the patience of a saint." And then she adds: "Our Master wants me, I am sure, to repress my eagerness. I hope I shall always accept His will gently and submissively, even when it costs me most effort." When at last everything was

ready the Cardinal Protector proposed that, according to the Roman custom, the removal should take place with great ceremony in procession through the streets. The Mother General trembled at this prospect. "Only imagine," she wrote, "our all going on foot, with candles I suppose in our hands, and the Cardinal with the chaplains leading the way. Just picture to yourself this sight." She urged that the great distance between the Trinità and Santa Rufina made it very difficult to follow this custom and it was accordingly dispensed with, to her great joy, for she felt as if she would have died of shame on the road.

On the 5th of May, the eve of their removal to Santa Rufina, she congratulated her daughters on the happiness of being called to teach the poor schools of that locality. "Blessed are you," she said, "to be chosen for this work of evangelizing the poor. The Trastevere is the poorest part of this city, and people look down on the children of what they call a despicable populace. Far from us such a thought; even as regards history, they are the descendants of the old Roman race, and have shown themselves lately again worthy of their origin, by their brave defence of the Pope. You will find in those children the elements of great sanctity, a little kindness will go a great way in winning their hearts. Your work must be specially one of charity, and Jesus the Father of the poor and the lowly will bless it."

The removal was effected in silence, without any ceremony and by successive detachments. A temporary chapel received the Blessed Sacrament, the church having to be repaired and blessed. Mother Barat was present at the first Mass said in the house, and remained there some time. She left Mother Desmarquest in charge of the novitiate.

On the 29th of May a farewell audience was granted by the Pope to Mother Barat. She told him what an honour and a happiness it would be to her to possess a few lines written with his own hand. Two days afterwards

Gregory XVI. going beyond her hopes, addressed to her a long Brief, in which, after recalling the approbations given to the Society by his predecessors, Leo XII. and Pius VIII., he said: "It is with all our heart that we bless the work which our well-beloved daughter has founded with so much labour, and governs and watches over with so much wisdom."

On the 3rd of June the Superior began her homeward journey. She stopped for a while at Parma, where the Archduchess Marie Louise, ex-Empress of the French, was finding consolation in her altered fortunes in devotion to good works. She warmly welcomed Mother Barat, and showed her a convent where she was anxious to establish a house of the Sacred Heart. It was just opposite her house, surrounded by a fine cloister, and decorated with frescoes by Correggio on mythological subjects, which the Mother General, in spite of all her charity, could not understand being tolerated in a religious house. She agreed at once to surrender these halls to the school of painting which coveted them.

The school of Parma was to be reserved for the daughters of noble families. As a compensation, Mother Barat stipulated that a poor school should be annexed to it, and then promised to send some of her nuns in the following spring.

On the 12th of June she left Parma and went on to Turin, and then to Chambéry, where she made a memorable retreat. For some time past her humility had persuaded her of its urgent necessity. She took for her temporary director the Abbé Favre, a missionary priest, very austere himself, and who led others with proportionate severity. Having given free scope to his penitent's attraction to penance, she indulged in it, if we may use such an expression, amply; gathering, for instance, prickly leaves out of the garden with which she made herself a belt. The Sister

who waited upon her found it out and took away this instrument of torture, but Mother Barat substituted for it an iron belt, and the blood which stained her clothes revealed the rigour of this penance. The poor Sister could not restrain her tears. But never had the presence our Lord been so manifest and so sensible to Mother Barat, and when her companion, Madame de Limminghe, called her away from the tabernacle before which she was immersed in contemplation, she would exclaim: "Oh, He was uniting me to Himself so sweetly." The Abbé Favre used to wonder at this extraordinary love for mortification, and said: "We have a saint here who is as fond of penance as we are of sugar."

On the 18th of July the Mother General wrote a circular letter announcing the convocation of the Fourth General Council of the Society for the 29th of September, the feast of St. Michael.

Visits to the houses of Lyons, La Ferrandière, Besançon, Montet, and Metz, delayed Mother Barat's arrival at Paris till the middle of September. On the 12th of the month she arrived at the Hotel Biron after two years' absence. She had left it crippled and suffering, and returned to it entirely cured. There was a burst of joy at the sight of the Mother General, and all the inmates of the house, nuns and children, followed her to the chapel singing the *Laudate Dominum omnes gentes.*

The Council General met at Paris in 1833. The laws of the Society of the Sacred Heart had been finally fixed by the sanction of Rome, and all that remained was to secure their observance. To obviate, for instance, the possible reproach that, in the schools it had established, what was showy was preferred to what was solid, the Council studied "the means of forming the pupils to habits of simplicity, order, economy, and a taste for the useful." The system of studies was also revised and perfected.

Mother Barat's opinion was, that it is a mistake to cling too much to routine. "When souls are in question," she said, "what does God care for a pen or a pencil, a bit of wood or a bit of paper? Souls, souls at any cost." Those nuns whom the world accused of retaining the spirit of ladies of rank under their black veils had nothing more at heart than to multiply and enforce the rules of poverty, humility, and self-sacrifice.

This Council was also called upon to take a decision on the important question of the suppression of the house at Grenoble. Not only had the school of Sainte Marie-d'en-Haut degenerated from its former splendour, but the town had set up a claim to what had once been its property, and threatened to erect barracks, which would have completely overlooked the convent. To communicate this sad news to Mother Duchesne was a great trial to the Mother General. She knew how deeply it would grieve her beloved daughter, who did, indeed, write in answer, that this disaster had fallen on her heart like lead. It was one of the greatest of the sufferings which that brave and devoted woman had to bear during her arduous labours in the land where she was to spend the rest of her life, and to sow in tears that others might reap in joy.

On the 31st of October, the elections of the Council took place. One of the most important was that of Mother Galitzin as Secretary General. From that time forward she exercised a considerable influence in the Society. After the close of this Council the Mother General began the round of those visits which her infirmities and the state of public affairs had long delayed, and scarcely interrupted them until the Council of 1839. Wherever she went her daughters received her with tokens of veneration, which she was inclined to find fault with. She used to say on these occasions: "I know indeed that it is our Lord Whom you honour in the person of your Superior, but it is very

meritorious to discern that good Master when thus disfigured."

At Lyons, the Association of the Children of Mary, founded during her former visit, was the first object of her solicitude. The day after her arrival she presided at a meeting of the associates, and the children maintained by the congregation were presented to her. This was indeed a happy moment for Mother Barat. She was delighted at the sight of these little girls, and spoke to them in that lively and engaging manner which was peculiar to herself. Then turning to their Benefactresses, she said: "What a numerous and charming family Mary has given you?"

This peaceful day preceded a very different one. In the year 1831, Mother Barat had arrived at Lyons the day after an insurrection. She came there this time on the eve of a far more formidable conflict. It broke out on the 8th of April. A large number of workmen took possession of the heights which overlook the town, and carried on for four whole days a sanguinary struggle with the troops, marked by a courage worthy of a better cause. Shut up with her Sisters in the Rue Boissac, hearing nothing day and night but the sound of the tocsin, the firing of guns, the fall of the houses, and savage shouts which resound in the streets of a city given up to revolution —ignorant as to the fate of Paris and the provinces, which were reported to be in full insurrection, Mother Barat's heart was filled with anguish. It was only on the 14th that General Aymar's army succeeded in re-establishing order.

On the 5th of May, Mother Barat returned to Paris. One of her first cares was for her orphans, the number of which had increased, and consequently the necessity of a more spacious establishment. It was decided that the orphanage should be removed to Conflans, the village where she had taken refuge during the days of July. After three

months' residence at the Hotel Biron, the Mother General, accompanied by Madame de Limminghe, resumed her journeys. The first she took was for the purpose of a foundation.

At Charleville, in the Ardennes, a community had been founded two centuries before, by a young girl of noble family, Jeanne Idelette de Morel, for the education of poor children. The Dames de la Providence, as this community was called, had courageously gone through the revolutionary crisis. They had all refused to be secularized, and, emigrating together, had resided at Chimay, Rotterdam, Brussels, and at Essen in Westphalia, where they earned their livelihood by needlework; the aid of that Providence under Whose patronage they had placed themselves did not fail them in their need. Mother Jacquemard, an energetic and brave woman, after guiding her daughters during the trying years of exile, had brought them back to France in 1802, and established them at Charleville. After her death, Mother Justine de Gerlache, a person of eminent virtue, belonging to a family which maintains to this day its traditionary attachment to religion, became Superior of the Congregation. The pupils of these religious ladies were increasing daily in number, but that of the nuns diminishing. A branch of their Society, the Dames de Sainte Sophie at Metz, had already joined the Sacred Heart. The Sisters of Charleville thought of doing the same, but it was a hard trial to Mother de Gerlache to accept the extinction of an institute, endeared to her by all the sufferings it had gone through. She struggled against it as long as she could. But the Superior who succeeded her, Mother Terneau, made up her mind to propose a union with Madame Barat's Society. The answer of the Mother General was as follows: "I have felt for a long time past the greatest esteem and attachment for your Congregation. I have learnt from our Sisters at Metz

to appreciate it: the excellent spirit which they brought from their mother-house leaves me no doubt of the consolation and the benefit which our Society will derive from the union you propose. I am therefore inclined to go at once to Charleville, in order to bring it about as soon as possible." She went there on the day after the Assumption, 1834; and in the journal of that community we find that she soon won the hearts of her new daughters by her maternal kindness, and instructed them in the spirit of their new vocation, especially in the diligent practice of mental prayer. In the following autumn, Mother Prevost was placed at the head of the novitiate which these Sisters had to make, and which they went through with great fervour, Madame de Gerlache, at the advanced age of sixty-three, setting them the example.

This union was recognized by the Government in the course of the following year.

An important and still more evidently providential incorporation of a religious congregation with her Society soon afterwards called the Mother General to the south of France. A community of teaching nuns, called "Les Dames de St. Pierre, founded in the first instance at Grenoble by Madame Pierrette de Bourcet de Lassaigne, had subsequently established a second house at Marseilles in the Barony of St. Joseph, under the care of the Foundress' niece, Mdlle. Louise de Bourcet, who was a person of eminent virtue. At Sainte Marie-d'en-Haut she had made acquaintance with Mother Theresa, Mother Aloysia, and then with Mother Barat. The Sacred Heart from that time forward had been to her the ideal of religious life. Having proposed to her Sisters to seek a union with it, and finding that some of them objected to this step, she yielded to their opposition. But this disappointment and the delay of her most cherished hopes preyed on her health.

In the month of August, 1832, the Mother General had to write: "Our poor Louise is dying." And in the following month: "I will send you a letter from my dear Louise. What an angel she is! We shall lose her. She is dying of grief." In the height of her fever, the prayer "To be united to the Sacred Heart," rose to her lips. It was the cry of her heart. She often kissed her crucifix and exclaimed: "O my God, give me the Sacred Heart or Heaven." To one of her companions, Madame Vincent, she said: "My dear friend, I am sinking fast. Like Moses, I shall not see the promised land. Only one thing I had cared for in this world, and that was to unite you with the Sacred Heart!" She expressed an earnest wish to be received into that Society before her death, and Mother Barat sent her immediately the cross of the professed nuns. But by the time it arrived Louise de Bourcet had expired, and her last words were: "No more regrets! No more fears! I am going into the bosom of God." Mother Barat wept at the tidings of her death, and said: "We were not worthy of possessing that chosen soul." But what in life this holy religious could not compass was effected by her death. The union was petitioned for, and the Mother General looked upon it as a sacred legacy from her beloved daughter. She chose as the instrument of this work Mother Audé, who had accompanied Madame Duchesne to America and shared all the toils and trials of the first years of missionary life on the banks of the Mississippi, and was afterwards appointed Superior of the house of St. Michel, near New Orleans, which she governed with extraordinary wisdom of prudence. When Lower Louisiana was ravaged by cholera, six nuns and an orphan girl died in the house of the Sacred Heart. The Superior displayed on that occasion heroic courage. But after fourteen sleepless nights spent by the bedside of her dying companions, broken-hearted and ill herself, she sighed for what seemed to her

afflicted spirit the only remedy, rest, and consolation—Mother Barat and France. She wrote to her Superior: "You are my only joy. Some time spent with you would strengthen me, refresh my soul, and enable me to suffer with better heart. My good and dear Mother, will you not grant me to go to you?" But she added: "I wish, however, to have no other will than yours up to my last sigh; and if that sigh is to be one of suffering, still I shall die happy, feeling that I am obeying you." The Mother General's answer was summed up in the words: "God alone." "Jesus wants you to love Him, without any one to lean on or look to but Himself. Think of St. Francis Xavier in the island of Sancian, and do not be afraid. The goodness of God will supply your every need." But whilst she was leaving her daughter the merit of a complete sacrifice, Mother Barat was planning in her own mind that Madame Audé should be appointed, at the close of the Council, Assistant for America, and consequently summoned to France. This was accordingly done; her departure from St. Michel excited universal regrets. She had made the foundation, and it had prospered under her care. Since her return from America, she had hoped to remain a long time with the Mother General; but such hopes and wishes were never taken into account by Mother Barat when the good of souls was in question, and she insisted on Mother Audé's taking charge of the house at Marseilles. The climate, she told her, was desirable for her health; but above all, the interests of the Heart of Jesus called for this sacrifice. However, soon afterwards Mother Barat prepared to follow her, and from every place where she stopped on her way to the South gave her hopes of her speedy arrival, but such was not the will of God. So many fatigues had exhausted the Foundress' strength, and she fell dangerously ill at Lyons. This was the case almost every winter; but in this instance a violent fever caused

serious apprehensions for her life. In May she was able to leave her bed, but the weather was too hot for a journey to Provence in her weak state, and the doctors ordered her to recruit her strength in the quiet solitude of Montet, and afterwards at Besançon.

Meanwhile Mother Audé found at Marseilles the cholera, which she had so courageously encountered in America. "God does indeed will you on the Cross," the Mother General wrote. "Alone at St. Michel's you had to endure the terrible effects of this scourge, and you come back to Europe in order to fall in with it again! But I hope and believe that Jesus and Mary will protect you. I think the Sacred Heart will preserve you. He does not usually give us to drink a second time the same chalice."

The contagion approached the house of St. Joseph only near enough to evince the self-devotion of its Superior. Eight to twelve hundred persons were dying every day in the town, and the Sacred Heart appeared to be so wonderfully spared, that the parents of the pupils entreated Mother Audé to keep them at school. Madame Barat wrote to her: "Consecrate at once all your inmates to Mary. Suggest to Mgr. d'Icosie to order a procession to Notre Dame de la Garde, and let a vow be made to the Blessed Virgin, Protectress of Marseilles." This advice was followed, and the house of the Sacred Heart preserved. One of the Sisters was indeed attacked by the cholera, but Mother Audé lodged her in her own room, nursed, and cured her. When the epidemic subsided, a deputation of the pupils went to Notre Dame de la Garde, to hang up an *ex-voto* in thanksgiving for their preservation.

When the danger was at an end Mother Audé joined the Mother General, and returned with her to Paris, where they both remained till the legal recognition of the union of the Marseilles house with the Sacred Heart was made.

The year before an important foundation had been

made in the neighbourhood of Brussels at a place called Jette St. Pierre. It was a matter of regret to Mother Barat that the founders made it a condition that this house should be devoted exclusively to a school for children of noble birth, but she resolved to make as soon as possible another foundation for those of the middling class, and in the meantime she opened at Jette a poor school and classes for the instruction of the wives and daughters of workmen. On her return to Paris she established the mother-house and the novitiate in a separate house from the Hôtel Biron, and after spending ten months in this new abode with the novices she proceeded to visit her new daughters at Marseilles. On her way there, between Nissan and Narbonne, the heavy rains had made the Rhone overflow; the bridges were broken, and the mistral blowing with terrific violence. A young Sister who was travelling with the Mother Superior said to her, "Reverend Mother, I should be very much frightened, but I am not afraid of anything when I am with you." "This was exactly," Mother Barat remarked, "what I said to our Lord with rather better reason." On the 26th of May they arrived at Marseilles. Mother Barat's reception was so enthusiastic and so joyful that the coachman who had driven her to the door kept asking, "But who is this lady? They could not do more if she was a saint from Paradise."

She was delighted at finding the community perfectly happy and united, and the place itself and its situation all she could desire. It overlooked Marseilles and the blue waves of the Mediterranean. The sight of Notre Dame de la Garde, the thought of the holy Bishop Belzunce, and the first miracle of the Devotion to the Sacred Heart, filled her with holy emotion. "This ought to have been," she one day exclaimed, "the cradle of our Society." She liked to walk with her nuns in the beautiful inclosure, or to sit with them in the shade of what they called the

olive-tree "of peace," or in a little wood, which rung with their hymns. It was with regret that she left those fervent new children of hers, but the houses of Aix, Avignon, Annonay, La Ferrandière, and Chambéry were awaiting her, and on the 17th of August she arrived at Montet. There she devoted herself for some time to the novitiate, which had existed there for four years. The convent was buried in snow during one half of the year, and whole months elapsed without a single visit interrupting the profound solitude of the place. The pensions of a few pupils more or less maintained the poor community. There was a gratuitous school in the village, and the Sisters worked themselves in the garden. On one occasion a stranger was amused at finding a postulant of high birth, and wearing still the smart gown she had brought with her, struggling, with a stick in her hand, to keep in order four pigs committed to her care. The Jesuits were the ordinary preachers of the community. Father de Ravignan was often sent by the Superior of their house at Neufchâtel to the nuns at Montet. Mother Henriette used to call him "the grandfather of her novices," and Father Varin preached there a retreat which was marked with wonderful results.

Sixty religious, postulants, novices, and professed nuns, filled the house. It was a great school of religious life, and when Mother Barat arrived, and they listened to her earnest words, they said that their hearts burned within them, and felt inflamed with the love of Jesus Christ. There was amongst those young servants of His one who was destined to fill one day the most important post in the Society. Joséphine Gœtz had been educated at the school of the Sacred Heart at Besançon, and it was the Mother General's arrival at that house in 1832 which decided her vocation. The impression she made upon her was instantaneous and irresistible, and on the following day, as she was coming out of the chapel, Joséphine said to one of

her friends, "The Lord has just vouchsafed to me in my Communion an overwhelming grace." That grace was a religious vocation. She was then nineteen years of age. She went home for three months, and then entered the novitiate at Montet, where her Superior soon discerned the rare gifts God had bestowed on this young girl. She seemed even to have had a presentiment as to her future life, for once when Joséphine was dangerously ill Mother Coppens wept bitterly, and was heard to say, "Did I then deceive myself when I thought the Lord told me that this soul was destined to do great things for His glory."

On the same day that Joséphine Gœtz took the habit of a Choir Novice, another Sister, remarkable for nothing but her extreme simplicity, received that of a Lay-sister. She was only known as Sister Elizabeth, was often reproved for her clumsiness, for she was not at all handy, and accepted these reprimands with a humility which indicated no ordinary amount of virtue. Two years had elapsed since she had been sent to Montet. Nobody had an idea who she was and whence she came. These circumstances remained a profound secret between Madame Barat and herself. Very different were the lives of those two novices. One of them was to work in the sight of the world, and one day to succeed Mother Barat in the laborious apostolate of the government of her Order; the other, a high-born girl, whose family ranked amongst the noblest in France, conceived it to be her vocation to devote herself to the obscure and humble labours of a Lay-sister, to be the servant of the servants of God, known to none by her real name, and offering up this silent sacrifice to obtain special graces and much needed mercies for those she loved. It was long before Mother Barat made up her mind to sanction this exceptional act of self devotion; long and carefully she studied the character and the motives of Pauline de Saint-André, and at last became convinced that the resolution

made by that chosen soul on the day of her first Communion, and never since abandoned, was indeed inspired by God, and in accordance with His will. She lived and died unknown, a victim of expiation for others.

On the 3rd of October Mother Barat left Montet. She passed through Chambéry, and on the 20th of October arrived at that Convent of Turin which she was wont to call "her garden of delights." The King and Queen of Sardinia often used to visit the school. "We have no children of our own," they said, "and so we adopt those of the Sacred Heart." But these royal favours were not quite to Mother Barat's taste, and once when the Sisters were describing to her one of the King's visits, she archly replied: "His Majesty had better take care. If he visits our houses so often, I shall go and review his troops."

She remained two months at Turin, and from thence sent some of her nuns to make a foundation at Nantes. It was on the very spot where, during the Reign of Terror, the Vendeans guilty of wearing the badge of the Sacred Heart had been arrested, condemned, and shot.

At Tours there had been attempts at union with a community of Ursulines, and afterwards with one called of the Holy Ghost. Both these negotiations failed. A little colony was established in the Rue des Prés, but it did not prosper till it was transferred elsewhere. A more important foundation was made at that time at Pignerol, in an old monastery called l'Abbadia.

CHAPTER X.

The Novitiates.

1836.

On the 6th of December, 1836, the Mother General announced to the Society that important reasons, chiefly relating to their houses in Rome, required her presence in the capital of the Christian world. She left Turin on the 15th of December, visited her house in Parma, stopped at Modena, where the reigning Duke wanted a house of the Sacred Heart, and at Loreto, and on the 11th of February arrived in Rome, where she was received with the greatest kindness by Gregory XVI. Many valiant combatants on the side of religion were assembled at that moment round the Holy Father. The Abbé Lacordaire, the Abbé Guéranger, Father de Géramb, the Abbé Haffreingue of Boulogne-sur-Mer, were planning at the feet of the Pope the glorious campaign they were going to carry on in France. We may well imagine that Mother Barat was not idle in the midst of these apostolic workers. She began by enlarging the school of Santa Rufina, then opened an infant school for a multitude of little half-naked neglected children, who swarmed in the streets of the Trastevere, and then looked for a house for her novices, who were suffering in health from the crowded state of the one they occupied. She succeeded beyond her hopes. The purchase of the Villa Lante, belonging to Prince Borghese, placed the Sacred Heart in possession of one of the most magnificent

sites in Rome. This grand old villa was composed of two separate buildings surrounded by delightful gardens, and commanding scenes of matchless beauty. One of these habitations was a large palace in bad repair, which was called in the Trastevere "the old Palace of the Ghosts."

Above, there was a pavilion which could not hold more than twenty-five persons; the novices were to inhabit it until the palace could receive them. They moved into it on the 7th of June. Mother Barat had preceded them. She spent there fifteen months. "It was at Rome," she said, alluding to that period, "that I spent the most precious moments of my religious life." She employed hours in prayer in the tiny chapel, plunged in the thought of her own nothingness; or, in deep recollection, communed with our Lord as she walked in the Alley of Laurels, on the side of the Gate of San Pancrazio. Every one respected her retirement, and she emerged from these periods of contemplation with wonderful lights as to God and her own soul. Mother de Limminghe, to whom she voluntarily submitted all her conduct, and to whom she used to accuse herself of her slightest faults, was wont to say that God was so near to her that in the light of His presence she discovered in herself atoms of imperfection.

Twelve young girls of the best families in Italy gave her great hopes for the future of the Society in that country. Several of them were preparing to become real apostles. One of them, Ursula Simoni, even in the days of her novitiate, had sighed after the American missions, and when that object had been attained, raised her hopes to martyrdom. It so happened that a martyrdom of charity was vouchsafed to her. She died at the age of thirty-three in Louisiana, having with extraordinary self-devotion exposed herself to every risk during a fatal epidemic.

All these novices, whatever their rank might be, shared the plain, simple, countrified mode of life of their Superior.

Mother Barat entered into all the details and interests of the property which surrounded the Villa Lante, and looked after the lemon trees, the vines, the flower garden, and even the animals belonging to the place. In the autumn, she and the novices worked in the vineyard, and gathered the fruit in the orchard on the hill near the Gate of St. Pancrazio. They sat down on the grass to take their meals, or in the arbour of the garden near the Terrace of St. Onofrio, where tradition says that St. Philip Neri used to instruct his disciples. The Mother General related passages from the life of this great Saint, or other pious stories.

This life would indeed have been a happy one for her had it not been for the previsions of approaching troubles. There was much suffering and discontent amongst the people in consequence of the failure of crops, and in addition to the distress caused by destitution, the cholera was at Naples, and advancing towards Rome. By the end of August it was devastating the Eternal City, and especially the Trastevere. Shut up at the Villa Lante by the anxious solicitude of Madame de Limminghe, to whom she had promised obedience, Mother Barat was consoled by the knowledge that the poor and crowded house of Sta. Rufina had not been attacked. The Trinità dei Monti she had believed out of reach of the contagion, but the terrible news, which had been kept from her for a time, had at last to be told. Six of her daughters had died there during the week after the Assumption, and a seventh was at the last extremity. She felt her heart sinking within her as the successive names of her departed children were uttered, but made, as she wrote at the time, the same act of resignation as the Patriarch of old. At the same moment she received news of the death of several of her nuns in France, and of some of her most valued friends. There was much consolation in the details which reached her of the spirit in which those she so dearly loved had met their end—but the void they left behind was

keenly felt. Her first visit to the Trinità dei Monti after these days of sorrow was heart-breaking. At Sta. Rufina she did not miss any of her daughters, but when she was taken into the infant school a sad sight met her eyes.

She was shown a number of poor children between the ages of three and twelve, who had lost both their parents, had been abandoned in the streets, and taken in by charitable neighbours, themselves in the utmost poverty, and with their own families to provide for. The little orphans were lying heaped together on straw mattresses, like coveys of birds. Mother Barat could not help crying, but it was not tears only that she gave to these little ones. She promised that when their large house would be finished they should be received into it, and in the meantime that they would take charge of the most friendless amongst them. The next day several of them were established in the house of their new Mother.

Exhausted by all this mental suffering, and ill with fever, the Mother General had recourse to what she looked upon as her best remedy, she went into retreat, and spent eight days in perfect solitude with God. The following winter was a trying time; illness confined her to her room, but in the midst of her sufferings she was incessantly occupied with her three houses, repairing the old palace of the Villa Lante, filling up, by the arrival of nuns from France, the gaps which the cholera had made at the Trinità dei Monti, and then providing for the needs of the new orphanage at Sta. Rufina. This work of charity brought her into constant communication with the Princess Borghese, who during half a century was the friend of every servant of God who at Rome laboured in the cause of religion there or elsewhere. From that time forward a close religious friendship united her with Mother Barat.

On the 16th of May, 1838, the Mother General began her homeward journey. She stopped at her various houses

in Italy and France, was again laid up with serious illness at La Ferrandière, and with difficulty reached Paris on the 17th of August.

The first words Mother Barat addressed to her novices in the Rue Monsieur were these: "My dear children, I have lost my legs and my voice, but I felt I had still a heart, and that heart has been longing to get here." Then the thought of the daughters she had lost in Rome crossed her mind, and she said: "Oh, if I had the gift of miracles, none of you would ever die!" It was this maternal affection, so strong and so tender, that gave her such unbounded influence over her spiritual children. To be loved by a saint has often been the salvation of a soul, and no wonder, for nothing else images so well the love of our Lord.

In dealing with those who sought admission into her Society, she united in a remarkable manner cordiality and discretion. Most reverential was her feeling about vocations. What is so especially the work of God was not, she thought, to be approached in any other spirit. Suggestions on the subject to the school children she strenuously forbade. Nothing could exceed the reserve with which she acted from the fear of interfering with the action of grace, or the care she took to enlighten those who seemed prompted by mistaken ideas to embrace the religious life. She was often known to decide that those who consulted her had vocations to other Orders; and if there were temporal difficulties with regard to their admission, she often generously assisted in overcoming them. Nothing could exceed the kindness, delicacy, and humility with which she acted towards portionless postulants. To one thus circumstanced she said: "It is but fair we should receive others on the same terms that we were ourselves received. I was admitted under the same conditions." There was one earthly consideration which made her sometimes urge the delay of a postulant. This was when a

sacred duty had to be fulfilled at home. Her heart used to ache for parents who generously gave up to God their dearest treasures; but when for worldly motives a child was refused the liberty of following her vocation, Mother Barat was known to feel and to speak with strong indignation.

The house where her white flock, as she loved to call it, were sheltered, was admirably suited to its purpose. It stood at the farthest extremity of the Faubourg St. Germain, having on one side a court and a quiet street, and on the other a large garden and the wide alleys of the Boulevard des Invalides. Mother Barat shared the daily life of her novices, presiding at their meals and enlivening their recreations and holidays. She had a remarkable talent for narration, and used it on these occasions in a way which made these familiar conferences singularly interesting. The Apostolate of Charity was earnestly carried on in the Paris Novitiate. Not only was a poor school annexed to the house, but also a workroom for those of its scholars who had made their first Communion. She excited the novices to be zealous in teaching the children, and trained them in this practical way to the duties of their vocation. "Be stingy," she used to say; "it is a holy stinginess, my children, to save for the poor. The two devotions of the spouses of the Sacred Heart are devotion to our Lord and devotion to the poor." The Apostolate of Prayer she also advocated with ardour. The Abbé Desgenettes, the founder of the great work of Nôtre Dame des Victoires, always came to ask for prayers at the Sacred Heart whenever he planned some new undertaking for the glory of God. The missionary spirit was kept up in the novitiate by the letters of the Mothers in America, and by the visits of many a devoted apostle on his way to and from the scene of his labours.

The novitiate pined to answer the calls which were

addressed to the Society from every side. "I am obliged," the Mother General said, "to resist the pressing solicitations I receive from Poland, North Germany, England, and the United States, besides most of the principal towns of France." One day she mentioned to the novices the offers she had just received from Holland and New York. "And will you not accept them?" they all asked. "Who can I send?" "You can send us," several voices cried. "You, indeed! mere novices, and such novices too!" And after a pause she asked: "How many are you?" "Forty," they answered. "Only forty!" she rejoined, "alas, it is my fault. If I had been what I ought to be there might have been four hundred instead of forty."

This woman of holy desires was blessed in her great work for souls with the assistance of many great servants of God. The venerable Father Varin still continued to watch over the Institute he had so earnestly laboured to establish. Ever on the watch to preserve it from tendencies which might mar its usefulness and alter its character, he was always exhorting the nuns of the Sacred Heart, whilst aiming at an ardent love of our Lord and an unbounded zeal for His interests, to be on their guard against extraordinary ways which he called the bane of religious life. "I have such a dread of them," he used to say, "that I am almost tempted to say in the Litanies: 'From the gift of miracles, deliver us, O Lord!'" His coadjutor, so to speak, in this work, was that consummate master, guide, and model of religious life, Father de Ravignan, who for years and up to the time of his death—by his instructions to the nuns, the retreats he preached in the convent chapel, the direction of the Congregation of the Children of Mary, and above all, the example of his virtues, which Mother Barat used to propose to her daughters as the best lesson they could study—infused into their house, and those they influenced within and outside its walls, a spirit akin to his

own. No two souls could have worked in more perfect unison than his and the Mother General's. When called again to Rome by an imperious necessity at the beginning of the year 1839, it must have consoled her to leave two such shepherds watching over her flock as the aged saint who, like St. John, was ever exhorting her children to love one another and saluting them with the words, "How good God is!" and the ardent and devoted priest who might well be called the apostle of Paris. Her second visit to Rome was marked by the sharpest trial which had yet befallen her, without even excepting the painful days of the crisis at Amiens. A marked division of opinion had arisen in the Society with regard to several points connected with its good, but most especially as to the question of removing its centre to Rome. Many of the nuns, especially those that were not French, and even wise and prudent ecclesiastical friends of the Sacred Heart, strongly advocated this course. There was much to be said in its favour, and Mother Barat's devoted affection for the Holy See, her Catholic sympathies, and her love of solitude and peace, inclined her towards it. But, on the other hand, it was in France her Institute had taken rise; it was the source of most of its vocations and the scene of daily multiplying works of the highest importance. Could she forsake it without giving the Episcopate and the Government dangerous uneasiness? The least expression of the Holy Father's wishes would have decided the point, but he had left her perfectly free, and her anguish and perplexity on the subject became intense. This question, hitherto secretly raised, was beginning to be openly and violently discussed. The Council General was about to meet to consider it; the doubt was where it should hold its sittings. Some opined for Paris, some for Rome. Mother Barat inclined to Montet, in Switzerland, as neutral ground. It was in order to decide this point with greater freedom that she

left Paris. After spending some time at Montet, she gave up all idea of summoning there the Council, and went to Rome in April. On the 2nd of May she wrote a circular letter from the Trinità dei Monti, inviting all the councillors to meet there at the beginning of June. Some of them begged to be dispensed on account of their advanced age and feeble health. Mother Eugénie de Gramont was prevented leaving Paris by the threatening aspect of affairs. She was so strongly set against the removal of the mother-house to Rome, that she may have pleaded this excuse without much regret. The Council began by passing several measures which corrected irregularities, and usefully relieved the Mother General from a portion of her labours. As to these points there were no dissentient voices. But then came a number of alterations which tended to assimilate more entirely the rules and customs of the Sacred Heart with those of the Society of Jesus, and first and foremost the decision which definitively fixed in Rome the residence of the Superior General. Mother de Limminghe and Mother Galitzin had succeeded in carrying all before them. The latter especially, with her generous, energetic soul and absolute and unbending character, had taken the lead in this direction. Decrees in accordance with it were formulated, and soon to be submitted to the approval of the Pope. In vain Mother Barat urged the important considerations involved in these changes. She felt that the Council had acted imprudently, had gone too fast. The lights attached to her office of Superior made her perceive it, but her profound humility, carried to excess, if it can ever be an excess, prevented her from following her own opinion in opposition to the great majority of her councillors. After an audience from Gregory XVI., who blessed and encouraged them, the members of the Council dispersed. A circular from the Mother General gave a summary of the new decrees. The last was thus worded;

"The Superior General will henceforward have a fixed place of residence." She wished herself to break the news to the French houses, but already the alarm had been raised. Mother Eugénie de Gramont wrote a despairing letter, and when on the 8th of September the decrees were promulgated, the excitement in all the houses in France was intense. During four years the Sacred Heart went through an ordeal which would have been fatal for it but for the wonderful prudence and patient sanctity of Mother Barat. There was division within and without the Institute. Father Varin disapproved of the rash way in which Mother Galitzin, who had been commissioned to draw up the decisions of the Council, had ventured to substitute in the preface of the rules for the words, "The first end of this Society is to glorify the Sacred Heart of Jesus," those of St. Ignatius: "Its end is to consecrate itself to the greater glory of God." With the true instinct of a founder, he felt that to suppress the original words would be the ruin of the Institute, that it would be no longer the work God had revealed to Father de Tournély. Some of the Jesuit Fathers in Rome and in France sided in opinion with the Council; but the Superior General, Father Roothaan, afraid that the removal of the mother-house from Paris would set the Government against the Sacred Heart, and act unfavourably on their own Society, requested them not to take part in these discussions.

In the meantime almost all the French Episcopate, with Mgr. de Quélen, the Archbishop of Paris, at its head, protested against the change, and some of them addressed a complaint on the subject to the Sovereign Pontiff.

During all this crisis the immense majority of the Nuns of the Sacred Heart had no suspicion of the state of things, and even among those who were engaged in the conflict mutual charity did not suffer. Almost all the French houses had submitted with docility. The principal oppo-

sition, as might have been expected, proceeded from the Paris house. Mgr. de Quélen, who since the destruction of his palace had inhabited what was called the little Hotel Biron, exercised over that community an influence which had affected its spirit. Pious and charitable as he was, his Gallican tendencies rendered him suspicious of what was called the encroachments of Rome and the religious orders. It was under this pressure that Mother Eugénie de Gramont and others made Mother Barat feel how hard it is to suffer at the hands of those we love. It is fair to say that it was in a great measure the filial affection of her daughters which made them oppose their Superior. They were fighting against Mother Barat in order not to lose her. Even in the Court of Rome opinions were divided. The decrees had been submitted to canonical sanction, but the Pope kept silence. The Mother General gave on this occasion wonderful proofs of what can be affected by dint of humility, prudence, and gentleness. She never had a predetermination, never an obstinate adherence to her own opinion. Her spirit of conciliation was ever ready to open a door to every possible arrangement of matters in dispute.

"You may differ with us in opinion," she wrote to Mother de Gramont, "but your duty and your heart will raise you above these dissensions." And to others she said: "I rely on Mother de Gramont as much as on myself." Mother Grosier having expressed a fear that by making observations to the Mother General adverse to the recent changes she was running the risk of injuring their old friendship, she replied: "You may say everything you like to me, good, bad, or indifferent. I shall never doubt the purity of your attachment to your Mother and the Society." Throughout the whole of this affair she was ever ready to take the blame on herself of all that had been done against her own opinion. She seemed to take as her rule of conduct St. Vincent of Paul's maxim: "Give way as much as you

can, provided you do not offend God and your neighbour." Mother de Gramont and others petitioned that the new decrees, before they were made definitive and irrevocable, should be tried for a certain time, and not be for the present presented to the Sovereign Pontiff. Mother Barat agreed to this delay, and on the 19th of November a circular appeared which announced that according to the request of several Mothers, and in order to reconcile divergent opinions, the decrees would be submitted to a trial of three years. "If at the end of that time," the Superior added, "it is found that certain regulations have a bad effect, I shall not refuse to convoke another General Council." In the meantime her affectionate and deeply-feeling heart suffered acutely. Mgr. de Quélen, whom she revered and loved, had, without communicating with her, dated a letter from the house in Paris addressed to the Pope and Bishops of France, in which he denounced the recent decrees. On the other hand, her extreme indulgence for Mother de Gramont was blamed by some people as a weakness. She was constantly urged by Madame Galitzin, and others, to put down with a high hand the opposition of the house of Paris; but they never could persuade her to act as they wished. When Mgr. de Quélen died on the last day of that year, no one mourned over his loss more sincerely than Mother Barat. Not a shadow of resentment against those who blamed and opposed her could ever be detected in her words or countenance. She passed all the winter of 1839, and the spring and summer of 1840, at the Villa Lante, where princes and eminent personages sought her out, but her thoughts and time were devoted to God and the poor. At the beginning of August, encouraged by her old friends and the Holy Father himself, she began her journey to France, visiting on her way Loreto, where she was making a small foundation for the sake of the poor ignorant little girls whom she had seen swarming in its

streets during her first visit. And she felt also that a house close to the house of Jesus and Mary would be a safeguard for her Society amidst the storms that were besetting it. She had at first to lodge at the Marchesa Solari's, the benefactress of the foundation, who thought she would keep her in her house by surrounding her with every sort of comfort. This was on the contrary precisely the best means of driving her away. "Oh, dear!" exclaimed the poor Superior, "what attentions of every sort, prie-dieu, cushions, carriage! How ashamed one feels at all these comforts so near Loreto, and even in the very sanctuary where Jesus and Mary lived in poverty!" And in another letter she says: "How kind the Marchesa Solari has been, and yet I long to go away, for this sort of life is too contrary to my tastes, and I cannot forget what my position originally was." She remained four days at Loreto, and started again after the Assumption.

At Pignerol she found the holy Sister Elizabeth dying, and spent two hours by her bedside. These intimate communications filled with joy this lowly Sister. She was overheard sweetly complaining to our Lord that He forestalled her reward: "It is not this I asked of Thee, my God. I wanted only to suffer, and Thou knowest the reason of that wish." Pauline of St. André expired on the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, unknown in death as in life.

Mother Barat made another halt at Parma. She found the community established during the time of the holidays in their country house at Talighano. She liked during her stay there to walk up to the hill where the cows and sheep were grazing, and even to take for an hour the place of the sister whose business it was to look after them. One morning she asked a little shepherd boy as a favour to let her take care of his flock whilst he went to serve the community Mass. "This occupation," she said, "afforded

me a good subject for meditation in the evening, for having found how difficult it was to keep the sheep in the good pastures, I thought of Jesus, and said to Him, O Lord, how I do pity Thee, having to look after such bad and rebellious sheep, such as myself, for instance."

The Mother General arrived in Rome on the 29th of September. Her gentleness, her quiet goodness, her gracious manners, dissipated a great number of misconceptions. It was by continual converse with our Lord that she sought strength for her difficult mission. In the chapel of the school, in a dark corner between the sacristy and the altar, she used sometimes to pray for hours, and to shed tears concealed from all but God. Her health gave way again under the pressure of this continual strain. For two months she was laid up at the novitiate, but as soon as she was able to travel, proceeded to visit her houses in the north of France, and in the autumn left Paris to return to Rome, where she wished to do the same work of conciliation she had carried on in Paris. By the time she arrived at the Trinità dei Monti, her departure had produced a great commotion in France. In the eyes of many of the bishops and of the nuns, it was a kind of escape out of bounds; her perplexity became greater than ever.

Was she simply to conform to the decrees and reside in Rome till another Council took place, or was it her duty to calm the irritation her absence produced in France by a speedy return to Paris, at the risk of displeasing her Council and the Court of Rome? St. Vincent of Paul said: "At times, when human prudence ends and sees nothing clearly, then the light of Divine Wisdom begins to dawn." That ray of light in this instance came from the Vatican. Without any formality, or as yet any decision on the subject, Gregory XVI., hearing of the excitement caused by this affair, expressed his own opinion to Cardinal Lambruschini. It was in favour of conciliation. The Holy Father said:

"The Superior General ought to make her habitual residence in France. She can come to Rome from time to time to visit her establishments and keep up immediate and intimate communications with the Holy See." These words furnished Mother Barat with a clue out of her difficulties. She hastened to announce in a circular letter that she was staying in Rome only for a time, and intended to return to France in the course of the year; that the next Council, which would definitely settle the question, would meet in France.

On her arrival in Rome the Mother General found Madame Audé, whom she had appointed Superior at the Trinità dei Monti, at the point of death. For four months she scarcely stirred from the side of this much-loved daughter, and after she had closed her eyes, assumed the care of the house during the remainder of her stay in Rome, devoting herself actively to the service of souls. At her suggestion a retreat was preached in the church of the Trinità dei Monti to a number of Roman and foreign ladies, which produced excellent results.

In the middle of the summer of 1842, she felt it was time to return to Paris. More bent than ever on bringing about agreement and reconciliation, she was prepared to make every sacrifice for this object. To one of her nuns, who seemed afraid that she would return from Rome armed with excommunications against her opponents, she wrote: "You will soon be convinced, my dear child, that neither in my hand nor in my heart do I bear the thunders of the Vatican."

Cardinal Lambruschini had recommended that the next Council General should be held at Lyons, as neutral ground between Rome and Paris. Mgr. de Bonald, a great friend of the Sacred Heart, who had been recently named Cardinal under the title of the Trinità dei Monti, had offered his diocese for this assembly. And it was from Lyons that a

circular letter, dated June 1st, fixed for the day of meeting the 26th of July.

Before leaving Rome, the Mother General was received in audience by Gregory XVI. The Holy Father blessed the travellers and the Council, affectionately adding, that he looked forward to seeing Madame Barat again. "I know," he said, "that you have had painful moments to go through, but the Lord has blessed and will bless you all." Then, making upon her the sign of the Cross, he repeated, "Yes, yes, always *Cor unum* and *Anima una*." Four days afterwards, on the 21st of June, Mother Barat left Rome. She stopped on her way for a few days at Sant' Elpidio, a little town of the legation of Fermo, situated on a hill overlooking the Adriatic. A community of Oblates of Mary in that place had been authorized by the Pontifical Government to join her Society. She adopted them as her daughters, and then passing through her houses of Parma and Chambéry, she arrived at Lyons on the 22nd of July.

The assembly was very numerous. Besides the Assistants, Mother Barat had invited to it this time the Provincials and Vice-Provincials, and moreover a professed nun from each province, with a few of the local Superiors. "I should like all our opponents to come to it," she said.

The only one that delayed her arrival was Mother de Gramont. She alleged the opposition which the Archbishop of Paris made to her departure, and this was but too true.

Mgr. Affre imagined that the convocation of the Council at Lyons was an attempt to withdraw the Institute from his authority. On the 12th of July he addressed a severe letter to the Superior General, stigmatizing as irregular any meeting of the Council except in the mother-house, of which he considered himself the head. He gave notice of his opposition to all the bishops in France, twenty-two of whom adhered to his protests against the Lyons Council

and the new decrees. There was but one resource left, and that was to consult Rome. A commission of eight Cardinals was named to examine this urgent affair, and in the meantime the Superior General thought it necessary to suspend the opening of the Council. She proposed to the councillors to enter into retreat. Madame de la Barmondiére had given to the Sacred Heart a house on the heights of Fourvières, and there Father Barrelle gave the nuns the Spiritual Exercises. The effect of this retreat on each of those holy souls, who, though differing in opinion, were bound by the closest ties of charity and mutual desires for the welfare of their Society, was wonderful. Madame Galitzin who perhaps more than any other had caused distress and suffering to her Superior by her imperious volitions, whose character was absolute and rigid, but whose heart and soul were profoundly generous and heroic, was inspired during this retreat to offer herself to our Lord for suffering and death, as a victim for the Society. This offer was not in vain.

It became a question whether the Council could take place at all. Cardinal de Bonald hinted with regret that it was no longer in his power to authorize it in his diocese on account of the dangers and divisions threatened by the letters of the Archbishop of Paris.

It was at this moment that the Mother General received the answer from Rome. A Brief of the Pope, a copy of which was sent to Mgr. Affre, informed the French prelate that his quality of Archbishop of Paris did not give him jurisdiction over the whole Society of the Nuns of the Sacred Heart. The Archbishop submitted, but was deeply hurt. "What should he say to the Government," he asked of the Mother General, "when consulted according to custom by the Minister of Public Instruction with regard to any new foundations? and what would that functionary think of the Archbishop being no longer endowed with

authority in the Society?" This letter was the presage of a new danger.

Under these apprehensions the Council indefinitely adjourned its sittings. The Mothers were obliged to separate. The Superior General left Lyons on the 9th of September, approved by some, blamed by others, and tormented by anxieties. She went to Besançon, and thence to Autun. There she received a letter which filled her with consternation. She had suffered from the opposition of her own Society and that of the Episcopacy. Still more formidably did it meet her on the part of the Government.

The Society was threatened with dissolution, its schools with suppression, and its houses with confiscation, in the event of its adhering to the recent decrees. How was Mother Barat to act? Even her best friends seemed afraid of advising her. It is needless to enter into all the details of the struggle she went through for several months, and of the double resistance she had to make against extreme parties on both side. One of the greatest sufferings that a holy person can go through is to have to fight against venerated and beloved adversaries. This fell to her share, and the still greater trial of uncertainty as to the exact line duty points out. Under the pressure of this harassing doubt she held her peace, and following the example of Jesus Who in His agony persevered in prayer, she wept and poured forth incessant supplications in her little oratory adjoining the chapel.

Unkind comments were not wanting on what some persons chose to consider as tokens of the weakness of advancing age in the Mother General. People said, "that the good head, the real head of the Society, was Mother de Gramont." There was no necessity to apprize Madame Barat of her own inutility. Her humility often suggested the thought that if she were to resign her office the storm would be allayed, and from the bottom of her heart she

longed to be set aside, and as she expressed it, "thrown overboard to save the ship."

But even then God, after trying her in this furnace of affliction, was preparing the way of deliverance and the firm establishment of her Society. Mgr. Matthieu, Archbishop of Besançon, proved himself at this juncture the true friend she needed. Chosen by the French Episcopate, and approved of by the Holy See, he went to Rome with the mission of representing the whole affair in its true light. A letter from Mother Barat which he presented to the Pope was graciously received. A commission of Cardinals appointed to examine the recent decrees listened with equal favour to his explanations. Not but that all these prelates would have preferred the new decrees, and Rome to be the residence of the Mother General, but they questioned the wisdom of insisting upon them at the risk of a rupture between Rome and France, and to the detriment of those very interests they wished to save.

It was in the middle of March that the Mother General, who was then at Conflans, received a letter from Mgr. Matthieu, written on the 9th of March, which contained the final solution of the question, "Whether there was reason to approve of the recent decrees of the Chapter General of the Nuns of the Sacred Heart?" The commission had replied in the negative, and had declared that the Society was to be governed according to the rules confirmed by Leo XII.

Thus ended this protracted trial, which had touched Mother Barat in the nearest and most tender part, the very existence of the work of her life, but only served to perfect her virtue and intensify her charity. Even the Archbishop of Paris had done justice throughout to her merits. It grieved him, he had often said, to be obliged to oppose a Saint.

On the 6th of April, 1843, she wrote a circular letter, in

which she expressed her hopes that her daughters would forget all their past divergencies of opinion, and feel that the voice of the Vicar of Christ is the voice of God. Her expectations were not deceived. It was not long before conformity became unanimous, the traces of that violent conflict subsided like the waves calming down after a storm, and great was the profit those days of affliction left behind them. The Society reaped the advantage of a firmer establishment of its Constitutions. "It had been near its ruin," the Mother General wrote at that time, "because with the best intentions in the world, its members had not understood one another." The lesson she drew from these events was, the necessity of always adhering to authority, and that God does not bless even the best of motives when they lead to oppose it.

It was a wonderful circumstance, and one only accounted for by the prudent kindness of Mother Barat, that a world-wide Society could have gone through four years of such agitations and trials without losing a single establishment or a single subject.

The Mother General's gratitude to the Holy Father was unbounded. "He has saved the Society!" she constantly repeated; "and we must become his consolation by a truly religious life and love of our Lord."

CHAPTER XI.

Foundations in Europe, Africa, and America. Mother Barat's visits to her houses.

1840.

During the anxious period we have described, Mother Barat, with as much liberty of spirit as if she had not been all the time suffering severely, had provided for the welfare of the continually increasing houses under her government. The requests for foundations were becoming so frequent that it was impossible to find subjects enough for them. Proposals were incessantly addressed to her from America, Africa, and all the kingdoms of Europe. In the New World, after ten years of languid progress, the Society had entered on a new phase. Mother Galitzin, who had been sent there as Assistant General for that country in 1840, succeeded wonderfully. The people at St. Charles called her "the Queen." The first act of this new sovereign was the important foundation at New York. At St. Louis, Mother Duchesne, worn out with age and infirmities, was claiming as the only reward of her labours to be relieved from the office of Superior. Overcome by her supplications, Mother Galitzin accepted her resignation. Delighted at her release this heroic soul give herself up entirely to a life of prayer and abjection, until she heard one day that Bishop Rosati was asking for a colony of religious of the Sacred Heart for the Christian tribe of the Potowatomies, on the confines of Missouri. Inflamed by the accounts Father de Smet had given her, Mother Duchesne

had felt all her former ardour renewed, and scarcely recovered from a long illness, was quite revived by the hope of joining this missionary expedition. Mother Barat perfectly entered into her feelings, and wrote to her Assistant in America not to refuse to Mother Duchesne this satisfaction and the opportunity of thus completing her apostolic career. "You know, my dear Mother," she wrote, "that the foundation in Louisiana was not our ultimate object, and that it was for the sake of the savages that Mother Duchesne felt inspired to undertake this work." The venerable nun, then seventy-two years of age, was overjoyed when permitted to depart as a simple religious under Mother Mathevon, her former novice.

On the 8th of July the little colony arrived at the village of Sugar Creek in the Indian territory, where they were right royally received by the whole tribe with music and firing of guns.

During a year Mother Duchesne felt the joy at seeing her life-long desire actually carried into effect, and her dear savages instructed in the love of Christ and devotion to His Sacred Heart. But her strength was spent, and her end approaching at the very moment she would have wished most to labour. Her life had been one of hope deferred, and it was not God's will that in this world that ardent soul should fully gratify its passionate longing, or quench its thirst for the conversion of souls. He alone knows how many she saved, but not in the way or the precise means she had planned. Such are His Divine dealings with many a chosen labourer in His vineyard. Bishop Kenrick, struck by the rapid failure of her health, insisted on her returning to St. Charles, where she led a hidden life devoted to prayer and to suffering, offered up for her beloved savages, whom she never could forget.

In the meantime, at her return from Paris in 1842, Mother Galitzin had been effecting foundations, removals,

and changes of various sorts in the province committed to her charge. An important establishment offered at Montreal took her to Canada. And then, though already suffering from fever, she travelled back to the south and found the yellow fever raging at New Orleans; far from being frightened away by this danger, she devoted herself to the care of the sick in their last moments. It almost seemed as if she was courting death, and it was not long before she felt the premonitory symptoms of the disease which was to carry her to the grave. On the 1st of December they manifested themselves, and Mother Galitzin knew that the hour was come when she was to make the sacrifice of the life she had offered up for the Society. She died on the feast of the Immaculate Conception. Her funeral was performed with great ceremony, and the negroes rent the air with their lamentations.

In the meantime, another continent was opening to the Sacred Heart. In 1839, the Mother General had seen at Rome Mgr. Dupuch, Bishop of Algiers, and he had spoken to her of his ardent desire to civilize Africa by means of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and had asked her to send him a colony of her nuns.

His request she at once complied with. He was too poor to purchase a house for them, but Mother Barat lent him the means to secure one on the height above the town, and five of her daughters embarked at Marseilles for Algiers in November, 1843.

From every part of the world similar applications came. One, for instance, from the Birman Empire. The idea of apostleship amongst idolators tempted Mother Barat's zeal, and she hesitated before refusing it. From Peru and New Holland pressing invitations were addressed to the nuns of the Sacred Heart.

In France new houses were everywhere springing up. One in particular was established at Laval for a special

object, which the Mother General had always much at heart, retreats for ladies living in the world. At Montpellier and Nancy, at Saluzzo, and in the beautiful town of Padua foundations were also made, and also at Lemberg in Galicia.

We must now speak of the work which at that time particularly occupied Mother Barat. England had always deeply interested her. As early as 1832, she had exclaimed, "That nation is made for great things!" And when many young Protestant girls were converted in the school of the Paris house, she wrote: "They will be our forerunners in England; for if the Heart of Jesus vouchsafes to help us we shall go there in eighteen months or two years' time to sow our grain of mustard seed."

It was in 1839, that she expressed this hope. In 1841, her plan was matured, and she had found an instrument for its accomplishment in the person of Mother Charlotte Goold, an English lady who had been educated at the school of Amiens. Her youth had been spent in London, Paris, and Brussels, at all of which places she had lived in the best society and gone out a great deal in the world. Her vocation was long opposed by her family, and became a source of immense trial. She also suffered severely in health after an accident from fire, which nearly occasioned her death. At the time we are speaking of she was thirty years of age. Mother Barat judged at once that she had a soul apt for work and suffering, and perfectly adapted to lay the foundation of the Institute in Great Britain.

Foundations having been asked for at once in England and in Ireland, Mother Goold was sent to organize the three new houses, which were established at the same moment in the United Kingdom.

The first of these was at Roscrea, in the county of Tipperary, where a community of Bridgetine nuns, with

their Superior, Mother MacMahon, wished to be united to the Society. Mother Goold's description of the extreme poverty of this convent by no means disheartened her Superior. "If it is our Lord's will," she said, "that the Society of the Sacred Heart should begin in Ireland with a Bethlehem, well let it be so." Mother Eliza Croft, an excellent religious, who had been Mother de Gramont's Assistant in Paris, was named Superior of this new foundation. Her admirable tact and perfect abnegation of self enabled her to become, according to the Apostle's precept, "All things to all men." Mother d'Avenas used to say that nothing would surprise her less than to see Mother Croft working miracles.*

* A few more words concerning this holy religious will be acceptable to those who still revere and cherish her memory. When a course of providential circumstances had led her to join the Society of the Sacred Heart, Mother de Gramont, under whose care she was placed, soon discerned her extraordinary merits, and took the most special pains to train this chosen soul. Nothing could exceed the gratitude of the novice who, in her humility, ascribed this more than ordinary solicitude of her Superior to what she was persuaded was her own extreme incapacity and insufficiency.

The excessive timidity of her nature was throughout all her religious life a source of keen trial and a subject of self-conquest. She felt this especially when she was named Assistant to Mother de Gramont at the Hotel Biron, intense self-diffidence made it so difficult to exercise firmness in government; but by dint of virtue and moral courage, she overcame that obstacle. Her devotion to the children and especially her tender care of the sick is still affectionately remembered in that house.

When, in 1841, the first foundation in Ireland was planned, Mother de Gramont proposed to the Superior General to intrust it to Mother Croft. The task was not an easy one. She had to govern a community of nuns who joined the Sacred Heart, but had by degrees to learn the usages and acquire the spirit of the Society. The gentleness, the sweetness, the patience of the Superior, gradually won all hearts. The way in which she spoke of the Rule, and the example she gave of affectionate submission to the Superiors of the Society, made the deepest impression on her daughters. They saw that the slightest expression of a wish on the part of those venerable Mothers was a law to Madame Croft.

Persons of the most different characters alike appreciated this holy woman. No one seems to have possessed to a greater degree the art of conciliating, reconciling, and uniting the hearts of those about her. The

It was near London that the next foundation was made. The Sacred Heart purchased a villa called Berrymead, a small house standing in the centre of a large park, which Lady Montagu had built in the last century on the ruins of an old Benedictine Monastery. Under other circumstances the price of this property would have alarmed the Mother General, but she had so much at heart the English foundation, that she was determined to make every sacrifice in order to secure it. And thus a little colony of four Choir Nuns and five Lay-sisters arrived at Berrymead on the 8th of December, 1842, and on Christmas Day Mass was said for the first time in the new abode of the Sacred Heart. Bishop Morris, formerly Vicar-Apostolic of the Mauritius, officiated on this occasion. Precluded from returning to the scene of his apostolic labours, this holy prelate, who held Mother Barat in the deepest veneration, devoted himself from that time forward to the spiritual care of the Nuns of the Sacred Heart.*

pupils of the three Irish houses which she successively governed testify to the deep sense of her virtues, which was experienced by all those who had anything to do with her, whether in or out of her convent.

From Roscrea she went to make the foundation of Armagh in 1851, and the one near Dublin in 1853. It may be said of her that in every one of those houses she bore the heat and burthen of the day, for she fulfilled a variety of offices at once in the house and even in the school.

Her health entirely failed during the last years of her life, and her sufferings were severe. She was sent to the house of Glasnevin in hopes that the Dublin physicians would be able to cure her; but she became rapidly worse, and gave the most wonderful examples of patience, courage, and sweet resignation. Her death was as calm and holy as her life. When informed that her last hour was approaching, her recollection deepened, and humbly and silently she yielded up her soul to God leaving behind her an impression of sanctity, which still remains attached to her memory.

* Dr. Morris, Bishop of Troy, was born in London in the year 1793, and was remarkable at an early age for piety and learning. In his fifteenth year he entered the Benedictine Order of St. Gregory's, Downside; and during the interval between his profession and his ordination devoted himself to the study of theology, the classics, and English and French literature, whilst at the same time he devoutly practised all monastic

It was then that for the first time Mother Barat crossed the sea and came to England with Bishop Morris and Madame d'Avenas. On the 4th of June she was at Berrymead, and kept there the feast of the Sacred Heart to the

duties. Soon after he became a priest he was sent to what was then the London District, and officiated for some years at the Portuguese Chapel, South Street, Grosvenor Square. One of his duties at that time was to visit the hospitals, where he was indefatigable in his efforts to obtain the ministrations of priests to Catholic patients. In 1822, whilst still engaged in the missionary duties of a priest in London, he was admitted to the honour of sitting in the Chapter of the Benedictine Order and received the distinction of Predicator Generalis.

In 1832 he was appointed Bishop of Troy *in partibus infidelium*, and sent as Vicar Apostolic to the Mauritius. After labouring for ten years in this arduous post he returned to England in 1842, where he resumed a life of active self-devotion and toil. From the time when the Nuns of the Sacred Heart were established in England, an event which he had ardently desired and which he chiefly contributed to bring about, the services he rendered them as their chaplain and spiritual guide were incessant and devoted; but they did not preclude him from lending his aid not only in the two dioceses with which he was most intimately connected, but in every part of the kingdom where his presence and his good offices could aid the cause of the Church. His love of his own Order and his profound esteem for the religious life went on increasing as he advanced in age. His generosity to the poor, the kindness of his heart, the austere simplicity of his life, endeared him not only to the community he so much loved and valued, and to the children under their care, but to all his neighbours, Protestants as well as Catholics, and the regard felt for him by the prelates and clergy of the Catholic Church in England was universal. Proof of this was given by the general feelings of sympathy awakened by his death.

The immediate cause of the aged Bishop's decease was in keeping with the whole course of his life. He had promised to preach at Liverpool, at the consecration of Dr. Scarisbrick, who was appointed Bishop in the Mauritius, the scene of his own labours, and though such a journey in the wintry season was most trying and he felt himself seriously ill at the time, nothing could induce Dr. Morris to disappoint his brethren on such an occasion. His weakness was so great that he could hardly dress himself on the morning of his departure, and he had a strong presentiment that his end was at hand, still he went and preached at Liverpool, in the morning in English and in French in the evening. On Shrove Tuesday he attended a meeting of the Benedictine Fathers at St. Anne's, Edge Hill, and then proceeded to London on his way back to Roehampton. On the journey he fainted, and arrived at his house, Subiaco Lodge, entirely exhausted, and remained for two days unconscious. On the Friday he revived, and was able to receive the last sacraments with full presence of mind, sent his blessing to the Reverend Mother, the nuns, and the children, with a fervent

great joy of their nuns and of their pupils. As soon as the children saw the Mother General she completely won their hearts. As eagerly as in any of her French houses they crowded round her in the garden, listening to all her words, and anxious to get her blessing. On the day of her departure they shed many tears, and Mother Barat herself was much moved.

In October, 1843, a house had been established in the village of Cannington in Somersetshire. Lord Clifford, whose daughter had entered the Order of the Sacred Heart, had lent the Institute this house, but from the beginning it did not succeed. The Mother General had foreseen that this would be the case, and during her visit to England found it necessary to suppress it. After a short sojourn at Berrymead she returned to France, and after resting two months in Paris travelled to Rome, where she arrived on the 23rd of January, 1845. Her object was to consult the Cardinal Protector on various points of interest to her Society, but whilst engaged in these important matters she assumed the title of head mistress of the school at the Trinità dei Monti, where she spent the spring, and with the most affectionate familiarity taught and watched over the children. Her kindness extended even to animals: a sick goat belonging to the establishment would only feed out of her hand, and made its way into the room of the servant of God, trying to get as near to her as possible. It was noticed that as Mother Barat advanced in sanctity she seemed to share the power possessed by some of the saints over the animal creation.

request for prayers. On the Saturday he had a relapse, and died on Sunday morning, the 18th of February, 1872.

The honours paid to his remains, the tears shed at his funeral, the grief of all his friends, and the heartfelt regrets of the community whom he had watched over for so many years, attested the affection and gratitude inspired by the remembrance of that long and holy life spent in the service of God and of the poor.

She had the pleasure of finding on the walls of the convent the picture which, under the name of *Mater Admirabilis*, has been disseminated throughout the whole Church, and enriched with so many indulgences. It was the work of a young artist who had come to Rome in order to cultivate her talent for painting, but who now, finding herself blessed with a higher vocation, entered the Society of the Sacred Heart.

Mother Barat had been ill during the last part of her stay in Rome, but she enjoyed the consolation of being near the Blessed Sacrament, Gregory XVI. having given leave to the nuns to place It, for her sake, in an adjoining room. She was thus enabled to hear Mass. Cardinal Lambruschini brought her one day a small miniature of Our Lady of Sorrows, and insisted on her asking the Blessed Virgin to obtain her cure. She did so, and her prayer having been heard, she prepared to leave Rome.

It was with a heavy heart that she took leave of the aged Vicar of Christ. A sad presentiment warned her that the time of his death was approaching, and she said to herself as she went away, "Oh, I shall never see him again; he is so old, and I at such a distance!" As she was kneeling at the Tomb of the Apostles in the Church of St. Peter, her tears fell on the pavement. The Holy Father had indeed said to her as she parted from him, "We shall meet again." But would it be in this world? Great was her surprise when, on the following Saturday, she was fetched from the house of Santa Rufina and heard that the Pope was at the Villa Lante, and was asking to see her. She could only fall at his feet, and vainly tried to express feelings which entirely overpowered her. The Holy Father gave her his blessing, and spoke words of consolation and encouragement. She was never to see him again.

On the 10th of June Mother Barat left Rome, and visited her other Italian houses. When skirting the shores

of the Adriatic she said one day, "I was trying to discover in the distance the coasts of Greece. In my childhood I was full of enthusiasm for that land of genius, art, and military glory, where intellect and courage always ended by surmounting brutish strength and numbers. I must own it, there was a time when my heart was full of Athens, Corinth, and Sparta. It was with anguish I used to read the story of the Pass of Thermopylæ. I laugh when I think of it, though I am still of opinion that we ought to interest our children in what is beautiful, and instil into them a knowledge and love of history, otherwise memories would fade away and the past vanish as if it had never been. The study of the rise and fall of nations may teach them to soar higher than their petty cares. It will impress upon them the *sic transit gloria mundi*, and lead them, when struck with the nothingness of earthly greatness, to turn to Him Who abides for ever, whilst empires crumble into dust."

In the evening of that long summer day the nuns left the carriage and strolled along the sea-shore, saying their Rosary and singing the *Ave maris stella*. Their Superior had a deep sense of the hallowing effect of the beauties of Nature, and this made her travel through these enchanting scenes, one constant course of pious meditation and fervent prayer.

Such journeys must have been as good as a retreat for her companions. Even their vetturino felt this holy influence. He used always to tell the innkeepers that it was a saint he had brought to their houses. They used to start very early in the morning, and when a bell was heard at a distance the driver called out, *Ecco una Messa*—"They are ringing for Mass," and then the nuns went into the church to hear it and to communicate. The sweetness of the Mother General's disposition had quite won his heart, and he wept when they parted company at Turin. "She is the

sort of saint I have dreamt of," he said; "I do indeed want to go to Paradise if such good people as these are to be found there." We must not omit to mention that the present of a watch, which the Mother General gave him, seemed to afford this good man a sort of foretaste of celestial happiness.

It was during this journey that the sorrowful tidings reached her of the death of her brother, Father Barat, who died that year at Paris, on the feast of St. Aloysius. She had longed to see him once again, if only for a few minutes, in this world, and many things combined to make her feel this trial very acutely. The knowledge that with his last breath he had blessed her and her Society was, however, a great consolation. We cannot stop to enumerate the ever-increasing number of her convents she had to visit on her way back through France. Amongst them was the house at Kientzheim in a beautiful spot near the Black Forest, and one of the most promising establishments of the Society. The work of the Sacred Heart had made within a few years immense strides. Patience in waiting for the moment marked by Providence was one of Mother Barat's greatest merits. For years she often delayed the execution of a favourite project until she could discern some clear token of God's will. This habit of passive obedience to the leading of the Holy Ghost was a remarkable effect of grace in so ardent a nature. On the other hand she excelled in that charity which could derive encouragement from circumstances which would have seemed to most people discouraging. What chiefly attracted her to accept foundations was the moral and spiritual misery of the places where she was asked to send her daughters, and after once resolving on a work nothing prevented her from carrying it out. A deep sense of her personal nothingness was joined to this indomitable and persevering zeal. Somebody said to her one day, "You had not the least idea when you

began the Society that you would govern one day so many houses." "But I have not the least idea of it now," she simply answered.

Mother Barat arrived at Conflans on the 17th of September. It was there that in the year 1842 the Novitiate of the Rue Monsieur had been transferred. The great charm of the place was its quiet and rural simplicity. What she had wished for was a very homely abode, and the style of the buildings was quite after her heart. The house was small, ill-constructed, and bare. The grounds extensive, and adorned by a fine avenue of horse chestnuts. On the side of the hill there was a little wood which contained rural oratories, sacred images, and a calvary. Mother Barat in her advanced age found in Conflans, what in former days she had called Sainte Marie-d'en-Haut, "the place of her rest." She came there for the first time on her return from Italy when the question of the decrees was in full discussion, and from that time forward it became her principal residence. She delighted, as has already been said, in the country and its various pursuits. She was kind to every living creature. There was not an animal about the place that did not benefit by her arrival. The house-dog was unchained, the goat set free, the sheep let into the meadow, the hens visited. She was often surrounded by these domestic favourites.

Mother Barat was never so happy as in the midst of her novices, and used to say that away from Conflans she was like the dove out of the ark, which could not rest till it returned to it.

"My children," she said one day, "I come to claim your hospitality." "Hospitality, Reverend Mother? Does not Conflans belong to you?" "Oh, no, I possess nothing. Conflans belongs to the novitiate, and unfortunately for myself I am not a novice. So it is you who receive me in your house." Another time, when she arrived very unwell,

her first words were, "My children, it is a poor cripple who comes to pay you a visit. I am like a ghost that appears and disappears. If that great servant of God, St. Bernard, called himself 'the phantom of his age,' how much more can I lay claim to that name! But for all that let us rejoice, for we are nevertheless the spouses of Jesus Christ."

While the works of the fortifications were going on in the neighbourhood of Conflans, there was a garrison at the Fort of Charenton, the spiritual state of which greatly interested the Mother General. The chaplain of her house instructed the soldiers. They were invited to the chapel, and exhorted to brave human respect by going to their duties, often for the first time in their lives, at the parish church. Many of them were confirmed in the chapel of the Sacred Heart at Conflans.

On these days her military friends were always treated to a good breakfast. Once one of these soldiers had struck his superior officer and was in danger of being condemned to death. Mother Barat took him to Paris, concealed in her carriage, and succeeded in obtaining his pardon. These poor men never forgot their benefactress. In one of her journeys, when she was waiting for the train at a station in a town where the regiment which had been at Charenton was garrisoned, she was recognized by her old acquaintances. "It is the good Mother of Conflans," they said to one another, and in a moment they made her a seat with their knapsacks, begged her to sit down, showed her the books and rosaries she had given them, and listened to her pious advice till the bell rang for departure.

The teaching Madame Barat gave to her spiritual children can be summed up in what she said to them on the first day of the year 1843: "Do you want to be saints?" she asked. "Oh, yes," they all replied; "we do indeed." "Then, my children, you must *give all*, and you will *have all*."

The recreations were often spent in a circular arbour, which went by the name of the Hall of the Apostles. The novices sat in a circle round the Mother General so that they could all see her, for there was something speaking in Madame Barat's countenance and gestures. Her principle was that joy is a magnificent acknowledgment of the goodness of God. "Let us be gay and laugh," she was wont to say, "so long as our joy is founded on our Lord." The spirit of her direction was so simple, straightforward, and cheerful that it went far to preclude any illusions as to supernatural gifts. At the same time she always spoke with humble and reverential faith of the favours which God sometimes vouchsafes to chosen souls. Her prudent discernment in this sort of case was evinced in her conduct towards a Sister whose name is now well known.

In the month of June, 1844, a postulant of about twenty-two years of age, called Marie Lataste, asked to be received as a Lay-sister at Conflans. She was a simple peasant, born in the village of Mimbaste, near Dax, and had been accustomed from her earliest childhood to work in the fields. She had gone through sharp temptations and inward trials, and they had left an expression of suffering on her countenance, but the struggle once over, God conquered that soul and flooded it with lights and graces. Since the end of the year 1839, Marie Lataste had experienced supernatural communications with our Lord. These revelations have been published since her death; for the most part they preceded her entrance into the Society of the Sacred Heart. Mother Barat expressed no decided opinion as to their nature,* but subjected this postulant to the sure tests

* This is what she wrote to Mother de Limminghe on the 13th of February, 1863: "One line about Marie Lataste. You are wrong to reproach yourself for your ideas about her book. We have quite a right to examine and to form a judgment on this question, and as long as the Supreme Authority has not decided we may express our opinions. . . . Those revelations are no doubt in some respects very extraordinary. . . .

of abnegation, obedience, and self-sacrifice. Marie Lataste was perfectly happy in the midst of these trials. She said some time afterwards to one of her former directors, who was questioning her on the subject: "I am here in a place of rest and repose of soul in the Heart of my God. He leads me in a way which He has shown me, and which I hope always to follow. It is His will that I should live a hidden, humble, and unknown life for God and in Jesus Christ, and this is enough for me." And in another letter she speaks still more clearly, and uses the following remarkable expressions: "Our Lord is just as good to me as ever, though He deals with me in a different manner. There is now nothing doubtful or sensible in His communications to my soul. The way in which He leads me is simple and ordinary, and I enjoy the deepest peace."

Each year now brought with it losses and separations which the Mother General could not but feel deeply, even though they were softened by wonderful consolations. God called to Himself in rapid succession Madame Eulalie de Bouchaud, of whom Mother Barat said that she had all the qualities for a Superior and for a Mistress of Novices, so seldom united in the same person; Mother Aglaé Varin, niece of the founder, mature in virtue, though young in years; at Conflans an Irish novice, Philomena Henneberry, who had been the joy and pride of the nuns at Roscrea; Mother Clara Quirin, the holy Superior of the Abbadia; Mother Nicoud, at Avignon, whose last words were, "Cling to your religious vocation: it is a sublime thing to be a religious and an apostle, a religious and a victim;" her

I should not have ventured to publish them if it had depended upon me. But the best way is to leave the judgment of these extraordinary things to those who have a right to pronounce upon them, and, if we like, select for our own use what can help to strengthen and edify us. I suppose you have received the recommendation not to place this book in the hands of any of your own nuns whom you do not know to be solidly pious, and whose imaginations are easily excited."

successor, Mother Edmée Lhuillier, who had been the first to institute the work of the Children of Mary, and of whom the Mother General said, "Where shall we find another such apostle?" and then Mother Antoinette de Gramont died in Paris in the arms of her sister. But of all these trials the hardest was the loss of Mother de Charbonnel, her venerable assistant, perhaps, after the Foundress, the most eminent exemplification of the spirit of the Sacred Heart. She had become completely blind, but her understanding had lost nothing of its clearness. Baptismal grace, never forfeited, gave to her old age the child-like charm of early life, and her love for our Lord was marked by a simple tenderness which seemed to increase as the time of eternal union with her Divine Spouse was drawing near. One of the novices said, "that whether they looked at her praying or meditating, or sitting alone and recollected in the presence of God, or whether, as they gathered round her and hung on her lips, she related to them stories of the last century, with that delightful youthfulness of thought and feeling which belonged to her spiritual life, she seemed the exact type of the interior spirit and the eternal childhood to which our Lord promised the Kingdom of Heaven."

Father Varin came one day to take leave of his spiritual daughters. He used the words of the Apostle as a farewell: "My dear children, love one another—that is our Lord's precept." His absence was to be a longer one than was expected. The Revolution impending at that time was prefaced by attacks on the Church, and as usual the Jesuits had the honour of being first assailed, at the tribune, in the newspapers, and in the Royal Council. They were valiantly and eloquently defended in the Chamber, and supported by a courageous coalition of bishops; but not so by Mgr. Affre, Archbishop of Paris. More awake to his personal jealousies than to the general Catholic interest, he became, without intending it, an accomplice in the

work of evil, by thwarting the Jesuits, paralyzing their zeal, restricting their action, and at such a moment evincing mistrust and throwing discredit upon them in a way which served but too well the purposes of the enemies of God.* In consequence of this spirit, the Nuns of the Sacred Heart at Paris and at Conflans were forbidden to have recourse to the ministrations of the Fathers, whether for direction or for retreats, and thus found themselves deprived of the spiritual assistance best suited to their Institute.

It was the first time since the foundation of her Society that Madame Barat had met with this spirit in the ecclesiastical authorities. The trial was severe, but as usual her exhortations to her daughters were to be courageous and patient, and indeed they were needed at that moment, for on the other side of the Alps the same agitation was beginning against Christ and His Church, and the Society was everywhere attacked on account of its name. At this critical moment arrived the news of the death of Gregory XVI., and in June Pius IX. was elected. Mother Barat hastened to send her congratulations to the Sovereign Pontiff, and received from him in answer a kind and flattering Brief.

Meanwhile the Sacred Heart was founding houses at Barcelona, at Bourges, at Rennes, uniting with itself a community of Dames de St. Pierre at Grenoble, and making a very distant establishment at Gratz in Styria, which reaped the benefit of a deep traditional veneration felt in all that country for the memory of Father de Tournély.

On the 22nd of July, 1846, Mother Barat left the house of the novitiate and came to reside at the Hotel Biron. But

* On his death-bed, as will be seen in the following chapter, the holy Archbishop repented of his line of conduct, and gave a great example of charity and humility, by sending two successive messages to the house of the Jesuit Fathers to express his regret and ask for their prayers.

a circumstance which brought out in a wonderful manner the loving nature and the great sanctity of the servant of God called her back for awhile to Conflans.

A young novice, Madame de Monestrol, had met with an accident which injured her head, and ended by producing an abscess in the brain. In the month of September of that year this illness was declared mortal. The tortures which it caused became so acute that three persons could scarcely keep the sufferer in her bed. Dr. Cruveilhier and Dr. Maisonneuve saw no means of relief but in the terrible and doubtful operation of trepanning. The novices seeing how little could be expected from earthly remedies, turned to God and commenced a novena in honour of St. Philomena. On Friday, the 11th of September, the Mother General arrived from Paris, hastened to the bedside of the sufferer, and began by speaking to her of Confession and Holy Viaticum, of her vows which she was about to make, and then of a violent remedy she would have to submit to. Madame de Monestrol herself has related what then took place. "Our Reverend Mother rose and came close to me. She made the sign of the Cross on my forehead and seemed in great anguish. I saw that she was praying. My head, which was burning hot, sank on her hand, and as it touched it I felt as if boiling water was spreading all over my body. The effect was instantaneous. I was overcome with emotion. My whole being was under a powerful influence." And so indeed it was; the young religious was cured in that hour. She went to confession, feeling her head completely relieved. Before receiving Holy Communion she was visited by Madame Barat. "Two ways are before you, my child," the Mother General said, "earth and Heaven. Choose between them!" "I know but of one way," the novice replied, "and that is the way of God." Then Mother Barat felt inspired to say: "America or Heaven?" "Well,

Reverend Mother, let it be America; for that way will doubtless lead to Heaven." The relics of St. Philomena were applied to her. She made her vows, and received our Blessed Lord. In her own words: "After I had communicated, the paralysis in my left side disappeared, I was able to clasp my hands, all my suffering subsided, and animation was restored to my whole frame; my sight, which had been quite obscured, returned, and I was able to see the view out of my window. My head was relieved, and the only thing I still felt was a heaviness about the forehead, such as remains after a bad headache." After a night of refreshing sleep the novice was only awakened by the sound of the Angelus. When Dr. Maisonneuve arrived next day, he could not believe his eyes. Deeply moved, he said to the Mother General: "This is indeed a miracle! I am happy to witness and to be able to testify to the truth of such a fact. The impression it has made upon me will never be obliterated." Dr. Cruveilhier was equally astonished: "She is not the same person I saw yesterday," he exclaimed, "let us thank God together!"

At Paris the house of the Rue de Varennes was engaging the anxious solicitude of the Superior General. For some years past the school at the Hotel Biron had been much talked about, and in some measure criticised by the public. The appearance of that large mansion, the high rank of most of the scholars and the wealth of some of those young girls, gave rise to an unfounded idea of worldly grandeur which grieved the humble Mother General.

Mother de Gramont, because of her own high birth, was sometimes accused of favouring the aristocratic character of her school, but Mother Barat always defended her against what she said was a calumny, and at the same time she did everything in her power to comfort and strengthen her under these trials. Unfortunately,

since the dissentions of the previous year, even though Madame de Gramont knew well that her Superior had never resented the line she had taken, and though their mutual affection was as intense as ever, habits of intimate communication and complete unreserve had never been perfectly re-established between them. She kept her sorrows to herself and bore their weight alone. In order to remedy this state of things, Mother Barat made up her mind to spend some time at the Hotel Biron. She did not assume the position of Superior. On the contrary, she referred every one inside and outside the house to Mother de Gramont, supported her authority in all respects, and was succeeding in the object she had in view when towards the end of August the measles broke out in the school, and with such virulence that several children died of it. Mother de Gramont devoted herself to her sick charges with her accustomed utter forgetfulness of self, and did not seem to know what fatigue was till on the 25th of September she felt the first symptoms of disease of the heart, and on the 1st of October was confined to her room, which she never left after that day. That devoted, arduous, agitated, and, towards its end, unfortunate life was about to be closed by a peaceful and beautiful death. After making a general Confession and receiving Extreme Unction, she publicly asked pardon of the Mother General and the Society with all the humility and tenderness of former days. Referring to the painful occurrences of the foregoing years she said: "Oh, it is those sad affairs that killed me!" Mother Barat kneeling by her side was stifling her sobs, and when the dying nun, feeling her agony approaching, again asked her Superior's blessing and forgiveness, she clasped her to her heart with torrents of tears. On the 19th of December she expired, after repeating several times, "I will everything God wills." Five minutes after the last utterance of these words all

was over. Mother de Gramont's death was deeply lamented in Paris by the whole Society, and especially by the Superior General, who did not easily get over this grief. She was roused from it by a succession of troubles and anxieties. Whilst the Pope was inaugurating useful reforms and popular institutions, a fierce democracy was assailing the Church and State, both in Italy and France. We need not recount the base and ungrateful return which the benefits of the Sovereign Pontiff were fated to receive. During the last months of 1847 the Revolutionists were preparing insurrections in almost every country of Europe. In the spring of 1848 they carried everything before them, and except in France and England the Sacred Heart was everywhere attacked.

In Switzerland the Society lost its house at Montet—Protestant Radicalism having as usual added robbery to tyranny by confiscating the property of the religious they expelled. The nuns and the pupils were dispersed in time and placed in safety. The supposed affinity between the Society of the Sacred Heart and the Society of Jesus was the principal cause of the brutal treatment it met with. Moreover, it was absurdly accused with favouring in Italy the Austrian domination. On the 1st of March Turin gave the signal of insurrection by expelling the Jesuits with odious acts of violence. On the following day the convent of the Sacred Heart was surrounded, insulted, and threatened, neither the King nor the Court being in a position to put down these cowardly aggressions against a house inhabited only by women. This siege lasted seven days: at the end of that time it became necessary to break up the school. The parents were in despair, the children inconsolable. They could not bear to part with their mistresses. Intense was the Queen's affliction, but she could do nothing. The best friends of the Society, the governor of the town, the Marchionesses of Cortanze and La Tour,

kept sending friendly messages to the nuns and inefficient protestations of good will. Mother du Rousier applied in vain to the Minister of the Interior, Count Borelli. "The King," he answered, "can do nothing for you. As his Minister, I am obliged to say so." She then turned to the Archbishop; but Monseigneur Franzoni had himself just received an official intimation to leave the country in order to save his life. On the 9th March the nuns had to abandon their house and take refuge with some friends. Soon afterwards they returned to France. Similar scenes took place at Pignerol, Saluzzo, Parma and Genoa. In that last city the nuns had to disperse and fly in disguise. It was with incredible toil and difficulty that they at last crossed the frontier. A revolution of a different kind had in the meantime taken place in Paris. On the 24th of February, 1848, almost without a struggle, Louis Philippe had lost his throne.

During those terrible days, forgetting her own danger and that of her Society, Mother Barat thought only of the sufferings of her brethren, whatever party they belonged to, and the Superior General of the Sacred Heart was transformed for the time being into a Sister of Charity.

One evening, for instance, a troop of fifteen to twenty men appeared at the door of her house, overwhelmed with fatigue and exhausted for want of food. "Give them immediately what has been prepared for the community," she said, and after the distribution each of those men walked away with a loaf of bread under his arm and one on the point of his bayonet, full of gratitude to the benevolent lady as they called her.

Another time, at six o'clock in the evening, Mother Barat was told that the court of the Hotel Biron was filled by a band of insurgents, who had brought on a stretcher a man in a blouse so dangerously wounded that he could not be carried any further. "We must take care of him," the

Mother General at once exclaimed; "God has had His own purposes in sending him here." She gave the poor man a room and a bed, sent for Dr. Récamier and Dr. Maisonneuve, ordered refreshments for his companions, and whilst the balls were falling in the garden and striking the shutters of the room where she had seated herself by the side of the wounded insurgent, she prayed earnestly that a priest might arrive in time to reconcile to God a soul which seemed on the verge of eternity. Those prayers were heard. Cyril, that was the name of this poor man, was cured both in soul and body at the Sacred Heart. He was soon able to walk to the chapel, and went to his duties. He had become quite a child of the house, and was seen one day in the garden leaning on Madame Barat's arm. He never called her anything but "My Mother General." She acted up to that title, and furnished him when he left the house with clothes and provisions.

Another wounded man, called Christopher, was long indebted to her charity. One day he came to the Hotel Biron to ask for a coat; the Mother General said to one of her daughters: "Give him your choir cloak; you shall have mine." A coat was accordingly provided in this singular manner for the pensioner of the Sacred Heart.

One of the nuns of that period gives the following details as to the charities of Mother Barat during that year 1848, when the misery of Paris was intense. She says: "The distribution of bread at the door several times a week became at last so considerable that the neighbours objected to the great assemblage of people they brought into the Rue de Varennes, fearing that some tumult might ensue. The head of the police called on the nuns to thank them for their charity, but requested that the distributions might be interrupted, as in such critical times danger might arise from so great a crowd of persons in one street."

These charitable ministrations saved the Sacred Heart

from popular animadversion. The newspapers spoke of them with praise. The house was left undisturbed, and the school, though with diminished numbers, went on as usual. It seemed probable that this Revolution in France would not be marked by the impiety which had disgraced it in other countries. One of Mother Barat's first cares was to go and reassure the novitiate at Conflans. "For the present," she said, "there is nothing to fear, and for the future everything must be left in God's hands. If we are driven away from France, well, my dear children, the Heart of Jesus is wide, and all the earth belongs to us. Have we not America and the Burmese Empire and China?"

It was whilst her own native land was thus agitated that Mother Barat received the news that five of her houses in Italy were closed. She did not for an instant lose her self-possession. After calmly reading the letters she said, "God's will, not ours, be done," and then continued giving directions. When the banished nuns arrived in Paris she betrayed no grief; her smile and manner were so bright and kind that their aching hearts felt comforted at once. The following months were spent in providing for the destination of those of her daughters who had returned from Italy. She thus announced their departure to the novices at Conflans: "Six of your Sisters are going to New York, six others will soon follow them. It is thus that our Lord causes good to arise out of evil. When light is withdrawn from one country it passes into another. Supposing we are compelled to leave France, well, we shall go and found new colonies."

In June came the awful days marked by the heroic death of the Archbishop of Paris. During the previous year the relations between Mgr. Affre and the Sacred Heart had resumed that paternal and filial spirit which would always have existed but for the misconceptions which had unhappily arisen and for a time misled him. Eight days

before his death he had been at Conflans and asked the prayers of the novices for himself and his flock. In his last moments the dying prelate's eyes were still further opened. He requested his secretary to carry to some friends and to the members of several religious orders assurances of esteem and affection. He named the Pope's Nuncio, the Reverend Jesuit Fathers, the Nuns of the Sacred Heart, and the clergy of the Society of Saint Sulpice. M. l'Abbé Jaquemet, who was afterwards Bishop of Nantes, was also commissioned to convey to Mother Barat the expression of his regrets. The Mother General often spoke with emotion of this last act of the heroic Archbishop. From that time forward she held in religious veneration the memory of the pastor who had given his life for his sheep, and valued a medal touched by the relics of him whom she called "our last martyr," as one of her most precious possessions.

The end of the year 1848 and the beginning of the ensuing one Madame Barat employed in visiting her communities in the centre and the west of France.

At Bourges she was received with marks of the highest respect by Cardinal Dupont, who was wont to say that he did not know what he would not sell, himself included, to help Mother Barat's Institute. During her journeys she was obliged to wear a secular dress, and delighted in mixing with poor people, at the railway stations, or in stage coaches, or at the inns, and she liked to be taken for a person of the lower classes. One of her pleasures on the road was to relieve the beggars who crowded round the carriage. Also the sight of the beauties of nature, of a fine valley, a hill dotted with white sheep, and, better still, the view of a spire, which spoke of our Lord's presence in one of His humble sanctuaries, gladdened her heart, especially if she could stop a moment to visit Him in His tabernacle. But often, also, it saddened her to see God's abodes bare and

neglected, whilst men's palaces and mansions were luxuriously furnished. The contrast shocked and grieved her.

In the intervals between her visits to different houses Tours was Mother Barat's favourite abode. In the month of January, 1847, the Sacred Heart had bought near that town one of the most venerable remains of monastic times. One day that Father Varin was passing below Tours in a steamboat, he was surprised to see one of the men on board take off his hat and say: "Marmoutier! St. Martin!"

On the spot he was pointing to, a soldier of the Roman army, who first became a monk and then a bishop, had led the life of the Fathers of the Desert, assembled his disciples in mountain caves and fastnesses, and astonished the world by miracles of sanctity, zeal, and charity. In still more remote times those caves had served as hiding-places to the first Christians of that country. Father Varin communicated to Madame Barat in the following letter the thought which had occurred to him as he gazed on that spot. "Would not a place so favoured by our Lord be a suitable abode for the Sacred Heart? Would I were near you at this moment, to persuade you to purchase Marmoutier! But I hope that the angels who watch over the preservation of one of the most precious monuments of our faith, will speak to your heart. By preserving it to the Catholic Church you will enrich your whole Society, which will for ever rejoice in the possession of so great a treasure. Oh, how the house of the Sacred Heart at Tours will prosper. Courage, then, and confidence! Only say *yes*, and I promise you that this purchase will draw down great blessings on you and your Society."

Yielding to these solicitations, and to those of Monseigneur Morlot, Archbishop of Tours, Mother Barat bought Marmoutier.

When she went there on the 12th of July the house was occupied by only a few nuns, who were getting it ready.

She was lodged in a turret, whence her eyes could glance on one side on the quiet banks of the Loire, and on the other at the wild rocks and caves where St. Martin and his disciples dwelt. Her first care was to send out of her room the carpet and furniture it contained, retaining nothing but a bed, a table, and two straw chairs. She made her retreat at Marmoutier. The Sisters were sometimes uneasy at the long hours she spent in the cold damp cave of the saint. When agitating news forced its way into her seclusion, she said, "I feel strong here against wind and tide. The time I spend with our Lord and His faithful servant calms me for the present and strengthens me for the future."*

Meanwhile the sufferings of the Church were continually increasing. Public passions in Italy, governed by the secret societies, had turned against the Pope. The news of Count Rossi's assassination struck every Catholic heart with horror and fear. It was soon followed by the tidings of the Holy Father's flight from Rome and arrival at Gaeta. Happy as Mother Barat felt to see France sending her armies to the aid of the Church, she could not but feel all the dangers to which the siege of Rome would expose her three houses. The Trinità dei Monti had been designated by the French Embassy as a place of refuge, but this had not protected it against threats and inroads. On the absurd pretext that the house communicated by means of subterranean passages with the enemy's camp, it was minutely searched. At the Villa Lante the nuns were expelled by a Pole of the name of Dobrowolski, who was astonished at the courage of the *Moinesses*, as he called them. "I never

* It was at the Convent of Marmoutier, in 1866, that a young English Sister died at the outset of her religious career. There, with one hand in that of her mother, the Marchioness of Lothian, and the other in that of her Superior, Cecilia Kerr breathed her last sigh, committing to each of these beloved mothers the love and care of the other. In that hour a tie was formed between them of a more than ordinary friendship.

saw such women," he said, "they are as brave as dragoons." Thrown and crowded into five open carriages, escorted by soldiers, as if they had been malefactors, and quite ignorant as to their destination, the nuns of the Villa Lante were taken to the Trinità dei Monti, accompanied by popular vociferations, the sound of trumpets, and cries of *Viva la Libertà!*

Meanwhile Garibaldi was devastating the house, and establishing in their garden two batteries directed against the French intrenchments near Porta Pancrazio. At Santa Rufina three officials appeared one day to read to the nuns an important document. This was a decree of the Roman Republic which released them from their vows and proclaimed their freedom. In vain the Superior assured them that this was a superfluous proceeding; the liberators were determined to fulfil their mission in the presence of the community. The Sisters unanimously replied that none of them were nuns against their will, that the Institute took every possible precaution to insure to each full liberty to follow her vocation, and that they were all determined to live and die in the state of life they had chosen. The delegates retired, evidently dissatisfied with the result of their visit. The whole of Italy was by that time convulsed, and the siege of Rome slowly advancing. In proportion to its closeness the danger increased. The novitiate was sacked, Santa Rufina nearly destroyed. The Trinità, where the three communities had taken refuge, by a miracle of Divine mercy, alone remained untouched. At last came the news of the deliverance of Rome. Mother Barat breathed more freely, but new trials were awaiting her. Since January, 1849, the cholera was again raging in France. It spared her houses, but numerous deaths from other causes diminished the number of her daughters, and owing to the evil times vocations were more scarce. And now the Founder of her Order, the holy Father Varin, was

about to change this earthly exile for the Heaven his soul longed for. He was in his eighty-second year, his body bent, his step feeble, his head, once so erect, sinking on his breast, but his joy kept increasing in proportion to the approach of his end. On the 19th of January, 1850, he visited for the last time the house at Conflans. In the words of the angels he wished the novices a good Christian new year, and gave them a conference on that Divine text, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will." He ended it by his favourite ejaculation, *Laudate Dominum quoniam bonus!* Then he rose, and as he was leaving the house, turned back, and said in a singularly earnest manner, "My children, always courage and confidence!"

This was his last farewell. At the beginning of April he came back very ill to Paris from Mantes, where he had been staying. On the 12th of April he received Extreme Unction. The Provincial bending over him, said: "*Courage*, my dear Father, a few more days of suffering and trial, and then those eighty years spent in serving our Lord will receive their reward. Have *confidence* in Him you have so much loved and Who loves you so much." The holy old man was shedding tears of joy. After an apparent mortal struggle he complained of being still alive. "Cruel death," he said, "she came yesterday and went away again, leaving me behind." On Friday the 19th he said in a positive manner, "I shall die to-day;" and shortly afterwards, "As to-day is Friday I shall soon be in Heaven." Accordingly at a quarter to seven he awoke as the community-bell was ringing, raised his head a little as if to listen to a voice calling him, and then fell back asleep in the arms of his Lord.

Two years afterwards Father Guidée published the life of Father Varin, and sent a copy of it to Madame Barat. In the letter she wrote to thank him, she humbly protested

against some of the things he had said about her. "I cannot help wishing, Reverend Father, that you had not spoken of me, or at any rate that what you say of me had been more in accordance with truth. For instance, the title of Foundress which you give me I consider quite out of place, and it pains me, for I certainly do not deserve it. I have been nothing but a feeble instrument, and had it not been for the indefatigable zeal and labours of my companions, and the enlightened spiritual assistance which sustained and guided us, what would have become of our poor little grain of mustard-seed? As the mistake you have made cannot be repaired, it will serve at any rate as a stimulus to my weakness. Pray to our Lord, Reverend Father, that it may have that result."

CHAPTER XII.

Development of the Society in the Old and New World.

1850.

The loss of all the ancient props of her Society warned Madame Barat of the necessity of providing in case of need for the government of her religious family after her death. This was the principal object of her journey to Rome in 1850. But she had also long been wishing to lay at the feet of the new Pontiff the homage of her devotion. She left Paris on the 3rd of October, and arrived in Rome on the 15th. She found the Villa Lante much damaged by the occupation of Garibaldi and his vandals, but sadder far than the material traces of the Revolution were the moral evils it had left behind it in the capital of Christendom.

The feast of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin in the Temple was approaching—a memorable day in the annals of the Society. Fifty years had elapsed since the Mother General had consecrated herself to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and her Society had been instituted in the little chapel of the Rue de Touraine. A circular letter from the Mother Assistants had requested that this happy jubilee might be fervently and solemnly celebrated in all the houses of the Order. That day was a happy one for all Mother Barat's daughters, but to her one of suffering, for she could not escape being praised.

In the morning she was obliged to listen to an allocution from the Rev. Father Roothaan, Superior General of the

Society of Jesus, which contained obvious though delicately worded allusions to her long life and labours. But when he said to her, as they were coming away from the chapel, "Reverend Mother, in no other instance has a religious order preserved for so long a period its founder or its foundress;" she quickly answered, "That is not to my credit, for it proves that none of them spared themselves as much as I have done." The evening function was still more trying. A preacher, reckoned very eloquent, took for the subject of his discourse the Society and the Mother General, and delivered a regular panegyric which made Madame Barat miserable. Her countenance betrayed her suffering, and at last, unable to endure the trial any longer, she slipped out of her stall and left the chapel. "What is that gentleman's name?" she afterwards inquired, and begged Mother de Limminghe not to invite him again to preach at their house.

Although the weather was singularly beautiful at Rome during that winter, the Mother General was as usual laid up and obliged to take to her bed. As soon as she was able to get up and to go out she was received in audience by the Pope. It was the first time that she had seen Pius IX. The thought of all he had endured, and the prevision of all he would yet have to suffer, overcame her during that first interview. He seemed the living image of Him Whom he represented, of our Lord when He was on earth. Her heart burnt within her when he spoke of the pressing necessity of Christian education founded on faith. Whilst listening to the impressive words he addressed to Mother Barat, her companion, Madame Prevost, thought of those Christ uttered, when on the road to the Eternal City He appeared to St. Ignatius Loyola, "Go, I will be favourable to you in Rome."

The paternal reception she had met with from the Sovereign Pontiff encouraged the Mother General to present

to the Holy See the requests which had been her principal object in coming to Rome.

Amongst the reforms proposed in 1839, and comprised in the general rejection of 1843, there were some measures universally acknowledged to be useful, and the necessity of which was becoming every day more imperative. She addressed a petition to the Pope on the subject of three changes. The first was the adjunction to the Superior General of the Provincial Superiors having the supervision of a certain number of houses; it was proposed that under her direction they should share a portion of the weight of government. The second was the renewal of the Council composed of twelve members, to whom the election of a Superior General was committed. The advanced age of the Superior rendered this re-constitution a matter of urgency. Mother Barat wished it to consist of Assistants General, Provincial Superiors, and a professed nun besides from every Province. Lastly, she asked to be permitted to appoint secretly a Vicar-General, who, in the event of the Superior's death, would assume the reigns of government until the election of a new Mother General.

These reforms were evidently wise and necessary. They formed the complement of the Constitutions. There was not a dissentient voice on that point in the whole Congregation. It was unanimously, and therefore with full confidence in the result, that the petition was presented to the Sovereign Pontiff at the end of January, 1851. After a delay of two months an answer was given, and that answer was a refusal.

This was a most painful blow to Mother Barat. She saw at once the dangers to which it exposed her Society. Things being as they were, at the death of the Superior General, her authority devolved as a matter of right to the first Assistant General, Mother de Charbonnel, who was blind, and older than Madame Barat. The Council

for the election of a Superior General had almost ceased to exist, and its method of renewal was doubtful and imperfect. The situation was critical. It had evidently not been understood hy the Holy Father, and no one but God could enlighten the mind of His Vicar on the subject. Madame Barat turned to our Lord and His Blessed Mother, and laid her petition on the altar dedicated to *Mater Admirabilis.* Mary listened to her prayer. Pius IX. heard of the great sorrow of the Superior General, and sent one of his Prelates, Mgr. Luciardi, to learn directly from her own lips what were her wishes for her Society. Better informed as to the question, the Pope withdrew the decree which had been issued, and named three Cardinals to reconsider the question. On the 23rd of May, 1851, a second decree appeared which annulled the first, and granted to the Mother General everything that she had asked, except that the Holy Father wished the words Vicars and Vicariates to be substituted for those of Provincials and Provinces, which was accordingly done.

Thus was the finishing touch given to the Constitutions, which were now finally established. Mother Barat's work was accomplished. She went to express her grateful thanks to His Holiness, and then left Rome, which she was never to see again.

At Paris, where she returned in order to prepare for the convocation of the Seventh General Council, she found so much political effervescence that she resolved to assemble it at La Ferrandière, near Lyons, and it was accordingly opened there on the feast of St. Stanislaus Kostka. The modifications in the government of the Society which the Pope had sanctioned were promulgated by this assembly. It organized the distribution of the sixty-five houses of the Society then existing into ten vicariates, eight in Europe and two in America.

Mother Barat now felt that she had accomplished her

work. She had always wished to retire from the government of the Society, but now this desire increasing with her age, it seemed to her that she had a right to indulge it. Her task was done, and she implored the Council to name another Superior General. They would not listen to her. She complained that she had vainly intreated to be relieved from the burthen she had borne for half a century. The Council had been deaf to her supplication, but she still hoped that before her death Jesus would free her from this terrible responsibility.

To the Children of Mary of Lyons she addressed an exhortation, in which she told them that their vocation was to be the helpers of the nuns of the Sacred Heart, and as it were the sequel of their order: "Ladies," she said, "it belongs to you to accomplish what we in our houses cannot do. We have enrolled you in a holy phalanx with the hope that you will act in the world in our stead, and by your example become apostles and win souls to our Lord." It was a privilege for them, she added, to be the first in France to take the name of Children of Mary, and she besought them to remain always models to those who would follow them in the ways of solid and apostolic virtue.

France at that moment had undergone a change of government. The *coup-d'état* of the 2nd of December and the agitation it had occasioned justified Mother Barat's precautions in assembling the Council in another place than Paris. Mgr. Sibour had, however, taken umbrage on that point, which was always a delicate question, but he expressed himself satisfied with the Mother General's explanations, and undertook to obtain the approbation of the Government regarding the changes lately effected. Accordingly a decree of approval was granted by the Council of State on the 5th of August, 1853.

During the following year and a half Madame Barat remained at the mother-house, and only went for a few

days' repose to her beloved solitude at Marmoutier or to visit some of the principal novitiates of the Society. Indeed, with the exception of these short absences her residence at Paris and Conflans was henceforward continual. At Paris her chief occupation was to promote more and more a spirit of simplicity in the school. She felt this to be not only a duty, but also essential for the honour and prosperity of her Institute. "It is a work of prudence and edification," she wrote, "to seek to destroy every vestige of our false reputation. It is so easy for the world and the devil to ruin a Society. Alas! we shall never, perhaps, overcome the evil impressions made all over France by our supposed magnificence in the beginning of the school at Paris. That gilded mansion favoured these reports, and made us lose not only scholars but the best postulants, those who seek in a religious Society, poverty, simplicity, and humility."

Amongst those who had been deceived by these reports was Mgr. Parisis, Bishop of Arras, one of the most eminent defenders of religion of that period. At last he determined to investigate the matter himself in its minutest details, and with that object visited the community and school. Mother Barat accompanied him during this inspection. At each cell he visited, and in all the community part of the house, he evinced fresh surprise at the poverty which met his eyes. At last he could not help exclaiming, "What! are these the splendours of the Hotel Biron!"

From that time forward the Bishop became a friend, a protector, an adviser, and a support to the Sacred Heart, especially with regard to the antagonistic measures which the Government soon endeavoured to carry out against the religious orders.

Mother Barat passed so much time, even in winter, in her little tribune before the Blessed Sacrament, that Dr. Récamier, who watched over her health with a filial affection, and venerated her as a saint, opposed it as much as

he could. The advanced age of the good physician, his long services and his eminent virtue, had given him a useful authority over the Mother General. One day that she was just recovering from an illness she had gone to the tribune to say her prayers, when the doctor unexpectedly arrived, and not finding her in her room said sharply to one of the Sisters, "Well, and where is Madame Barat?" The Sister was going to fetch her. "Oh, I guess where she is," the doctor exclaimed, "I will fetch her myself." He opened the door of the tribune, and said to her in a most authoritative manner, "Madame Barat, who gave you permission to leave your room? go back to it directly;" and shaking his stick, he drove before him the holy culprit, who half ashamed and half amused, like a child caught trespassing, hastened to her room. He made her sit down by the fire, and then kneeling before her, said just in the same imperious manner, "Now, Madame Barat, you are going to give me your blessing." The humble Mother General refused for a long time to comply with this order, but as the doctor did not rise from his knees she was obliged at last to extend her hand, and turning away her head, to say, "Oh, Monsieur Récamier, may God bless you!"

The two houses of Paris and Conflans were equally the objects of Mother Barat's affection and solicitude. Mother Desmarquest was the Superior at Conflans, and Mother Gœtz, who had made her own noviceship at Montet, and had since been at the head of the school at Besançon, was now Mistress of Novices; she had made her last vows on the 5th of March, 1847, and was immediately afterwards appointed to that important post. At first it seemed strange that the principal hope of the Society should have rested on a person as timid and as diffident as Madame Gœtz. The only merit in her which strangers could see was her excessive modesty, but as soon as she was well known the most eminent virtues were discovered under that shrinking reserve.

The Mother General had discerned all these gifts in Mother Gœtz; and amongst the acts which crowned her work may be reckoned the choice of this Mistress for its principal novitiate.

In 1852, at Mgr. Dupanloup's desire, a convent of the Sacred Heart was founded at Orleans in a house called St. Lazare, which Gaston of Orleans had given to the Carthusians in the seventeenth century.

Another once hallowed spot became again a place of prayer in the hands of Nuns of the Sacred Heart. At Layrac, near Agen, there was an old Benedictine Abbey founded by Pierre de Cluny in the eleventh century. The old building was falling to pieces, worn out by the lapse of time, and mutilated by the hand of man, but fine remnants of it still remained. A college had been founded there which had peopled the province with good Christians, but it had become involved in difficulties, and the Bishop proposed that Mother Barat should purchase the property. She did so in August, 1851.

At Moulins, a city consecrated as it were to the Sacred Heart of Jesus by the memory of St. Jane Frances of Chantal's death, and by its eagerness to respond from the first to the invitations of Blessed Margaret Mary, between the town and Iseure, where stands the magnificent College of the Jesuits, Mgr. de Dreux-Brézé offered the nuns a large space of land which presented every sort of convenience for their establishment. One day at the mother-house a Lay-sister came into Madame de Lemps' room carrying a statue of the Blessed Virgin. She placed it on her table, and said: "Our Reverend Mother sends you our Blessed Lady, who will be the Foundress of the house at Moulins, and begs you to get ready to start for that place." It was at the feet of that image of Mary that Mother Barat had just determined on the foundation at Moulins.

At St. Brieuc in Brittany, and at St. Pierre les Calais,

new establishments were opened at about the same time. Germany particularly interested the Mother General. Aix-la-Chapelle had sent her a deputation, at the head of which was the Baron of Lommessem, a devoted Catholic, whose daughter was about to enter the Society of the Sacred Heart. The jealousy of the Prussian Government seemed an insuperable obstacle. The difficulty was solved by the establishment of a house close to the Rhenish provinces, but on Dutch territory. The Baron of Lommessem bought for the nuns a property called Blumenthal, in the little town of Vaals. This foundation was preparing the way for future work in Germany. It was not long before at Warendorf near Münster a tenement in which fifteen orphan boys and fifteen orphan girls were sheltered was offered to the Sacred Heart. Mother Barat accepted it. She was very glad, she said, "that the first house in Germany should have been so poor. The children came to school in rags and covered with vermin. The Sisters cleaned, dressed, and civilized them. It rejoiced her to think that their first establishments in America and Ireland had also been made in the midst of the poorest populations. The thought of St. Charles, Roscrea, and Warendorf made up to her for what she never could be quite reconciled to, the gilded ceilings and fine proportions of the Hotel Biron.

An attempt was made in the year 1852 to establish a house at St. Gall in Switzerland; but the nuns, even though they wore a secular dress, were driven away by the mob. Different projects were in question for German foundations. Mother Barat had a strong desire to see her daughters at work in that country where, as she expressed it, the harvest was whitening; but at the same time, true to her constant practice of going on slowly, and only acting by the guidance of the Holy Spirit, she waited for some sign of God's will before taking any determination. The desired token came at last in the shape of an offer made to her for the purchase

of a property in Austria, called the Château of Riedenburg, a place admirably adapted, from its capabilities and its position, for the head-quarters of the Sacred Heart in all the adjoining countries. The Society bought it in 1853. Soon afterwards a proposal for the foundation of a house at Milan consoled Mother Barat for the loss of her other establishments in the north of Italy.

In 1854 she took two important steps towards the development of her Society in England and Ireland. The establishment of Berrymead was transferred to Roehampton, a more important locality, and one which facilitated easier communications with London.*

* This transfer took place in August, 1850. The first Mass was said on the 24th of that month by the Right Rev. Dr. Morris in one of the drawing rooms temporarily used as a chapel.

It may interest our English readers if we enumerate some few of Mother Barat's daughters who have laboured and died at Roehampton. Clementina Blundell was born at Crosby in 1810, entered the Society in Rome, but spent the greater part of her religious life, which was marked by singular devotedness and abnegation of self, at Roehampton.

Eleanor Mary Clifford, daughter of the eighth Lord Clifford, born in 1820 at Tor Abbey, Devonshire, who was received into the Society by Mother Barat at Paris. During the years which she devoted to the school at Roehampton, her holiness and goodness won all hearts. Mother Clifford's spiritual life was characterized by an ardent love for the Blessed Sacrament and devotedness to the interests of the Church and the Holy Father, for whose welfare she joyfully offered all the sufferings of her long illness.

Mathilda Thompson, who after her profession at Roehampton in 1851 gave herself with unwearying zeal and energy to the work of education, though during fifteen years severe sufferings made her life an incessant martyrdom.

Catherine Anastasia Cuddon was educated at Berrymead, and obtained her father's consent to pass from the school to the novitiate. Her religious life only lasted eight months, and she died on the feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, after making her vows on her death-bed and offering her life with the greatest generosity and with almost a feeling of joy. Her brother, Mr. James Cuddon, of the Inner Temple, rendered great services to the Society at the time of the removal of the community from Berrymead to Roehampton.

Lastly, we cannot omit to add Augusta Henrietta Fitzgerald, daughter of Sir Thomas Freemantle, who, as a wife, a widow, and a mother, had led a life sanctified by every Christian virtue. After giving two daughters

In Ireland, Armagh, the city of St. Patrick, had become the head-quarters of Protestantism in that heroic land which more than any other country in our days has nobly and boldly fought, spoken, and suffered for the cause of truth. More than half the inhabitants of Armagh were aliens to the Catholic faith, and the first sanctuary raised by St. Patrick for the worship of Christ was in the hands of a rich and powerful Protestant prelate, whereas the Catholic Bishop, with only a few zealous priests to assist him, had the spiritual charge of five or six thousand souls, most of them belonging to the very poorest classes. Cardinal Cullen, then Primate of Armagh, who had known Mother Barat at Rome, had recourse to her zeal, and invited her to Armagh. She agreed very readily to his proposal, for she had always felt the greatest sympathy for the trials of Ireland, and admiration for the courage with which her faithful children had endured them. Meanwhile Archbishop Cullen had been transferred from the See of Armagh to that of Dublin, and one of Mother Barat's greatest wishes was fulfilled when, with his cordial sanction and approval, she was enabled to establish a boarding-school for girls of the upper classes, and a day-school for children, at Glasnevin, near Dublin.

In America the apostolic work of the Society was rapidly progressing. The two vicariates contained between them fifteen establishments. Mother Duchesne was spending her last days at St. Charles in prayer, penance, and seclusion. Her niece, Madame Amélie Jouve, who was on her way to Canada, by the desire of the Mother General paid a visit to the venerable foundress of the American Mission, and wrote that she felt she had seen a great saint in her solitude.

to the Society, Lady Fitzgerald herself entered the novitiate at the age of fifty-seven, and spent the remaining years of her life in simple childlike obedience, which was crowned, after a long and painful illness, by a death of heroic patience and resignation to God's will.

In the Southern States, the novitiate had been removed from Fleurissant to Grand Coteau, and, in 1847, Natchitoches founded on the banks of the Red River; in February, 1851, the Sacred Heart had gone to Bâton-Rouge, and St. Michael's was attaining a high degree of prosperity. Northward, St. Louis continued its works of charity and apostleship; St. Joseph had opened its schools on the confines of the Indian territory in 1853, and the new mission of the Potowatomies had moved in the wake of the savages from Sugar Creek to Kansas. Mother Barat had been afraid at first that that very peculiar sort of life, the frequency of its migrations, and the great distance from other houses, would loosen the bonds of religious dependence, and alter in her daughters the spirit of the Institute. But the urgent appeals of the Indians had been so pressing that she yielded to their solicitations, and on the 9th of September, 1848, the nuns arrived at the station of St. Mary, near Westpart, where the Mother General sent them assistance and reinforcements.

Maria Cutts, an English Sister of humble birth, who had been brought up a Protestant, wished after her conversion to become a Lay-sister in the Society of the Sacred Heart. But Mother Barat soon discerned in this novice capabilities of a high order, and raised her against her own desire to the rank of a Choir Nun. She offered herself for the foreign missions, and at the time we are speaking of she was at the head of the southern vicariate.

The north-eastern one contained in 1853 eight establishments. Its novitiate had begun in Long Island, near New York, but in 1847 it was transferred to Manhattanville. This community directed in New York, day-schools, poor-schools, orphanages, work-rooms, and pious associations, in which more than a thousand girls were enrolled. At Detroit, Sandwich, Albany, New Brunswick, and other places, new foundations were made. Mother Aloysia

Hardey, afterwards Assistant General of the Sacred Heart, governed this extensive vicariate. In the meantime, the brave, noble-hearted woman who had prepared all these results had gone to receive her reward. Mother Duchesne had valiantly borne the heat and burthen of the day. She had gone through every kind of suffering during those long years of heart-sickening delay, of apparent inaction, of conscious inefficiency, of humiliation and disappointment. She had parted with all those who had shared her early trials. Mother Berthold, the dearest of her daughters, had died in her arms after a long, lingering illness—sent in answer to her prayer for detachment at any cost from all but God. When the seed began to grow, when fields of labour most congenial to her soul's passion for apostleship opened to the Sacred Heart, and she had made a desperate effort to press forward and to toil, as in other days, the power, not the will, failed; the last sacrifice had to be offered; henceforward she was to lie by, waiting for her Master's summons. Mother Duchesne died in November 1853, at eighty-four years of age, having for thirty-four years laboured in the American mission. On the soil where she and her four companions had silently landed in 1818, she left at her death more than three hundred nuns of the Sacred Heart, and their convents and schools were disseminated all over the United States. One of her favourite hopes had been one day to set her foot, as she expressed it, in Southern America. What she could not accomplish another performed, and she had the consolation before her death of seeing the religious who was to fulfil the dearest wishes of her heart.

The Archbishop of Santiago had invited the Society into Chili. Mother du Rousier started from New York in the month of August, 1853, and not without many difficulties and dangers crossed the Isthmus of Panama, a journey which could only be effected at that time on the

back of mules and along precipitous paths. She and her companions arrived at Santiago on the 14th of September, feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. Soon afterwards a school was opened there, and also an orphanage, a training college for teachers, gratuitous classes and congregations of Children of Mary and of St. Anne were likewise set on foot. The apostolical influence of the Society extended from that centre to the whole of Chili, and eventually over all the southern part of the New World. Such was the merciful result of the persecutions the Society had experienced in Europe. The very religious who began the work of the Sacred Heart in South America was the one who had been insulted at Turin, turned into ridicule on the stage, and driven out of the town. A priest at Nancy who did not know Mother Barat personally, on hearing of the rapid increase of her Society, once remarked: "You must have had a very humble foundress. I cannot account in any other way for the immense and sudden extension of your Society!"

Since the mother-house had been transferred from the Rue Monsieur to the Hotel Biron, it had lost the character of a place of retreat and recollection. The vicinity of the school attracted to it an incessant flow of visitors, and the rapidly ever-increasing number of pupils left no room for the nuns. In order to obviate these inconveniences the Mother General purchased in April, 1854, the remains of the Convent of the Feuillantines in the Rue S. Jacques. This quiet abode was admirably adapted for the mother-house of the Order and the residence of the probationists whom Mother Desmarquest directed at Conflans. Few persons besides Madame Barat understood as well as this aged religious the management of souls, but her advanced age and her infirmities were beginning to make her yearn for the eternal rest.

In the spring of 1854 the state of Mother Desmarquest's

health became so very alarming that on the 21st of April it was thought necessary to give her Extreme Unction. Madame Barat, who was suffering herself very much at that time from the results of a fall which deprived her of the use of her arm, insisted on going to Conflans. She seated herself at the foot of her dear daughter's bed, and gazed at her for three quarters of an hour. Mother Desmarquest did not look up or move, or give the least sign of recognition. Suddenly the Superior General rose, and, as if impelled by a heavenly inspiration, went straight to the chapel. There she knelt, and those within hearing heard her say several times, "O my God, give me back my daughter. O my God, let me keep her yet a while. O my God, we want her." A few minutes afterwards, as she passed amidst the assembled community, Mother Barat said, "Do not be afraid, my children; let us ask a miracle of our Lord, Who loves to be invoked. I go with a heart full of hope." She went into her friend's room, and Mother Desmarquest, with open eyes and extended hands, uttered a few words of gratitude. "We shall see each other again," Madame Barat confidently asserted. And so it came to pass. The improvement continued, all danger disappeared, the venerable nun was cured.

Conflans had won back from the confines of the grave its venerable Mother Assistant only to see her depart. Mothers Desmarquest and Charbonnel went to the house of the Feuillantines. The probationists soon followed them there. The whole Christian world was then preparing to celebrate the proclamation at Rome of the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception. Next to the devotion to the Sacred Heart, none has been more practised and promoted by Mother Barat's Society than that of the Immaculate Conception. When a telegram brought to Conflans the news that the definition had been pronounced, there was a great burst of joy, followed by hymns of praise. In the month

of February, 1855, on the day of the Purification, the Mother General consecrated the house of the Feuillantines to Mary Immaculate. After Vespers, kneeling down before her image, she laid the keys of the convent at the feet of the Queen of Heaven.

After placing the mother-house under the protection of Mary, Madame Barat resolved to devote her remaining strength to a course of final visits and instructions to the principal communities of her Society. The plan she had sketched out was interrupted by a severe attack of fever, and after staying some time at Kientzheim, and then at Metz, the Mother General was obliged to return to Paris, where painful news awaited her from America.

The south-western district of the Sacred Heart was still mourning over the loss of its holy Superior, Mother Cutts, when the yellow fever began to rage in Lower Louisiana. On the 26th of September this terrible disease had broken out at Bâton Rouge, where a number of nuns from different houses were making a retreat. One of them died, and soon Mother Praz, the Superior, was carried off by the epidemic. From that moment almost every day deaths took place. Seventeen of Madame Barat's daughters expired in quick succession. Their ends had been indeed most edifying and worthy of the Sacred Heart; but the poor Mother General, whilst she blessed God for the religious virtues of her children, felt at first almost overwhelmed with grief. The losses her Society had sustained were unspeakable, and seemed at first to threaten the mission of Louisiana with complete ruin. The destitution in which they left the diocese of New Orleans necessitated the suppression of the Sacred Heart at Bâton Rouge, and others were on the brink of dispersion. But the storm was weathered, and it was not long before Mother Barat wrote: "Now my hopes increase and strengthen. I might almost venture to say with the Prophet Aggeus: 'Great

shall be the glory of this last house more than of the first.'"

Another trial, and a most painful one to the Society and its Superior, was the threatened interdiction of the house at Chambéry. The Piedmontese Government, bent on its revolutionary work, tried indirectly to ruin the Sacred Heart by imposing on its teachers the obligation of being certificated by the State and the inspection of the school by its own delegates. Mother Barat saw at once the danger in which this measure would involve her Society. The day might come when this oppressive condition would everywhere be set to the exercise of teaching. If that happened, it would then belong to Rome to point out the line to be followed, and the wishes of the Holy See would always be looked upon as commands. But Rome and her most accredited organs had not expressed any opinion on the subject, and this made Mother Barat write: "I insist all the more on our independence, that I am sure that on this point we are acting according to the ideas of the most Roman portion of the clergy." She felt bound in conscience to resist and to make this sacrifice in order to preserve the true spirit of her Society. A first decision adverse to the Sacred Heart had been pronounced. Public opinion in Savoy protested against it. The question was carried before the courts of justice; the Archbishop renewed his courageous remonstrances; the municipal council petitioned Victor Emmanuel, and influential families in a high position personally urged him on the subject. Notwithstanding all these efforts, the school was closed in the autumn of 1856, by order of the supreme court; but it continued its work of charity, the education of the deaf and dumb. The Government suppressed an annual grant it had made to that institution, and Mother Barat declared that rather than turn adrift these poor creatures the Society would itself support them. During four years, this was the

only work continued at the Sacred Heart. Then came the annexation of Savoy to France, which completely changed the state of things. An Imperial decree of the 26th of August, 1860, re-established the rights of religious congregations; and on the 5th of November, the school of the Sacred Heart was re-opened and soon restored to its former prosperity.

But we must return to the year 1856, during which several new foundations were made, and Mother Barat accomplished her long-standing desire to visit her Austrian house at Riedenburg. This journey and all those that followed it were marked by the universal veneration paid to one whom everyone looked upon as a saint. There was something so holy about Mother Barat that wherever she passed a sort of anticipated homage was paid to her as if her sanctity had already been proclaimed. Thus at the Strasburg station all the railway officials, the station master at their head, showed her every kind of devoted attention. They brought an arm-chair to the door of the carriage, and almost quarrelled as to who should have the honour of carrying her into the waiting-room. Astonished at being the object of so much kind solicitude, she exclaimed: "But you make a mistake, gentlemen. I am only a poor little nun." Amongst these officials was an old soldier who had been with the French army at Rome, and remembered having been received into the Trinità dei Monti and taken care of by Mother Barat. He insisted upon kneeling down and kissing her hand. The Mother General gave him her blessing, made him a present of a prayer-book, and obtained from him a promise that he would be faithful to his religious duties.

Mother Barat's arrival at Riedenburg was considered quite an event in that country. Hermann Joseph Müller, Professor of Law and Philosophy at Würtzbourg, and one of the most able and courageous champions of the Church

in Germany, wrote to the Superior: "Let me know, I beseech you, how long your venerated Mother Foundress will remain with you. If I had to cross the Alps on foot I must see her, for she is the St. Theresa of our days." Finding it, however, impossible to leave Munich, this pious Catholic could not carry his project into execution. He expressed his intense regret in a letter in which he begged Mother Barat to send her blessing to him and to his family, and promised to go to Communion for her intentions on the feast of St. Magdalen.

Immediately on her arrival, at nine o'clock in the morning, the Bishop of St. Gall came to visit the Mother General. This venerable Prelate was eighty years old. Mother Barat had then attained the age of seventy-seven. She knelt down to ask for his blessing, but the Bishop at first could not be brought to extend his hands over her. However, when she insisted upon it he yielded, but said: "It is not I but the Heart of Jesus that blesses you a thousand times, you and your Society." He could only speak in German, and the Sister who translated what he said to the Mother General was somewhat distressed at the excessive eulogiums she had to convey to one so little fond of praise.

During her sojourn in this house Mother Barat was wont in the play hours to assemble the children under an apple-tree near the chapel, and spoke to them with such warmth and earnestness of heart that many of them afterwards declared that they owed their vocations to those conversations. That apple-tree was christened St. Magdalen's tree, and has retained the name ever since.

In the midst of this happy time Mother Barat fell ill. A violent cough and great weakness at her advanced age naturally gave rise to anxiety. "My children," she said, "I had hoped to be a comfort, and I am only a trouble to you. I wished to be of use, and it is I who have

to be taken care of. Our Lord has given me a good lesson."

As soon as she was sufficiently recovered to go out, Mother Barat went round the grounds of Riedenbourg in a chair on wheels which the nuns dragged themselves. "This is a sort of carriage I like," she said, "for it is quite in keeping with poverty." Her eyes gazed with delight on the beautiful banks of the Lake of Constance, and then on the snow-capped summits of the Tyrolese Alps. She kept exclaiming: "Oh, how beautiful this country is! How it raises the soul to God. Living in such a place how could you help being contemplatives?" One day she said, "I have asked our Lord to give sixty pupils to this house, I hope they will be granted to you, so much good can be done here." That day two years the school reckoned exactly sixty pupils.

On the 10th of August the Mother General was at Kientzheim. She received at that time news from Paris which gave her anxiety and then great affliction. Her most ancient remaining companion in the Society, Mother de Charbonnel, had received the last sacraments on the 6th of that month. On the 17th, some of those belonging to the house having asked her for her last instructions, she said, "Fidelity, my dear children, fidelity always." These were her last words. Two days later she died, in her eighty-second year, having been for fifty-two years a nun of the Sacred Heart.

On the 25th of August Madame Barat arrived at the Feuillantines. During all that journey the thought of Mother de Charbonnel was not for one moment absent from her mind, and as she drew near to Paris her companions heard her ejaculating, "and to think, alas! that I shall not find her."

A very desolate solitude was beginning to surround the Mother General. A day or two after her return to Paris

God withdrew from this world another beloved daughter of hers, Madame Emilie Giraud, who had been Superior at Poitiers, and afterwards at Lille. The only fault she was accused of was being over-indulgently good as a Superior. She was thinking of this one day at Mass when her attention was caught by these words in the Litanies of the Sacred Heart which the choir were singing, *Cor Jesu bonitatis oceanus.* They reassured her. "People may say what they like," she said to herself, "but I am not yet such an ocean of goodness as my Divine Master!"

Mother Barat delighted in this character. "I am sure," she used to say, "that God will bless the labours of that soul. She is like Nathaniel. There is no guile in her heart." She also declared that few people had understood her like Mother Duchesne and Mother Giraud.

In the midst of these sorrows and these losses Madame Barat courageously resumed her work and her travels. In the year 1857 she visited her houses at Lille and at St. Pierre les Calais. People were beginning by that time to discern that in this aged religious they were beholding a saint. Her own daughters especially, wherever she went, were careful not to lose one minute of her presence or one word from her lips. Under an ash-tree at St. Pierre, where they used to sit at her feet, an oratory was afterwards established. At Lille she was received with the same rapture and the same veneration as at St. Pierre. The children furtively stole pieces of straw from her chair and pieces of her veil, which they kept as relics. Others managed to get their rosaries touched by her dress. "If she is not a saint," they said to each other, "there is not a saint upon earth." Mother Barat complained of this to the Superior, and said, "I cannot understand how you can suffer children to take such false ideas into their heads." She was almost angry because a preacher ventured to praise her in the pulpit. "Did you hear the slaps in the face I

had to endure?" she said almost in tears. The children had prepared for her entertainment a sort of living picture of Heaven, full of angels and saints. "You made me fancy myself in Paradise," she said to them. "But only your heaven lasts a very short time. Fortunately there is another Heaven where we shall meet, my dear children, and then it will be for ever." The ladies belonging to the Congregation of the Children of Mary have never forgotten the exhortation she addressed to them on the 29th of July. Solid virtue was, as usual, what she dwelt upon. "Be pious," she said, "but let your piety be of the kind which sets duty above mere practices of devotion. Be firm against the world and human respect; be simple and modest; habits of luxury and novel-reading are the ruin of women. Bad books lead to Hell. If you come across any such works thrust them from you as you would a burning coal. I warn you against these things that you may not fall into sin; but if you ever find your fervour waning, come to the Sacred Heart, make a good retreat, and God will give you grace to rise again." And then she told them to make virtue amiable. "Do not judge the conduct of others; be indulgent. Do not think it enough to be good; you must also be amiable in that energetic and kind manner which we learn from the mighty and meek Heart of Jesus."

Mother Barat had now attained the age of seventy-eight. She wished to take leave of her communities in the south of France, and invited the Superiors and Mother Vicars to meet her at La Ferrandière. Accordingly a great number of Professed Nuns from those houses gathered around her, and heard from her lips words which they treasured up as a last remembrance. They never saw her again under the same circumstances, for this was her last journey. From that time till her death, she always remained in Paris, where she devoted herself to the government of her Society and that spiritual direction of souls in which she excelled. One

of her peculiar gifts was the power of conveying great truths and lessons in a familiar way. Her conversation and letters abounded in that sort of playful illustration. One of her favourite sayings was, "that humility is a needle which mends many a hole." And another of her maxims, that "we must not bargain with our Lord. If He asks us for a small bit of sacrifice we should give Him the whole piece."

The conferences she gave to the probanists, that chosen portion of her religious flock, composed of souls cast a second time, as it were, and on the eve of their final vows, into the mould of the Constitutions, were in the same spirit, but still more elevated in their tone.

Sometimes, overcome by her earnestness, Mother Barat's voice failed her. Obliged to interrupt her address, she would say: "Would that since my childhood I had never spoken of anything but Jesus! My mother used to say to me: 'The only good thing about you is your tongue.' Alas! I have not even that at this moment."

When in the year 1855 she was complimented on her feast day, her answer was, "O my God, why did You choose me to direct these souls? They deserved a very different Mother. Why did You not raise up another St. Theresa or St. Jane Frances of Chantal, or any one else worth having?"

Madame Barat's reputation of sanctity was by that time so widely spread, that she had no little trouble to fight against it. Mgr. Gerbet, Bishop of Perpignan, who had been one of the chaplains at the house at Amiens, having publicly congratulated the Society on the possession of such a Superior, she said to her nuns, who were delighted with what he had said, "Yes, indeed, my poor dear children, God could not have given you a better Superior . . . if He meant to humble you."

The peculiarity of Mother Barat's soul consisted in this combination of affectionate warmth of heart with high

sanctity. It was her great power of loving which gave her such unbounded influence over her Society. All her daughters were conscious that she loved them tenderly and intensely. Her way of conversing with them, the openness with which she spoke of her own thoughts and feelings, the affectionate sympathy with which she listened to the description of their trials and sorrows, assuaged all their griefs. No one ever left her without feeling cheered and consoled. Whatever might be her occupations she was always accessible, had always time for everybody. She never met any one without addressing her a gracious or kind word. To a nun who had been slightly indisposed, she said: "I did not see you yesterday, my dear child; why don't you come and show yourself to your Mother?" She smiled at another who was carrying a heavy parcel, and told her the angels were counting her steps. A look, a smile—Mother Barat's was a wonderful smile—the touch of her hand when she made the sign of the Cross on the forehead of one of her daughters, said even more than words.

She used sometimes to stand in the passage leading out of the community room with a candle in her hand to give light to the Sisters as they passed by. When they tried to take it from her, "No, no," she would say. "I have read that St. Theresa never went to bed without having performed at least one act of charity, and this is the only one I have done to-day."

The health of her nuns was a constant object of solicitude to the Mother General. "The saints of our time," she was wont to say, "are different from those who preceded them. The strong constitutions of former days enabled them to bear great labours and immense austerities. It is almost the contrary with us as regards bodily health. And as the Author of all sanctity acts always in the same manner and in the same spirit, we must make up for our deficiencies in that respect by an increase of humility,

patience, gentleness, and so on. Our predecessors were wholesale dealers in sanctity, we must be satisfied with retail. If we knew how to manage it we might still grow rich with greater safety, for there is no room for pride in a simple common mode of life."

To one of her daughters who was habitually ailing, she said: "Take great care of your soul, my dear child, but try also to take care of your body, for I venture to say to you as the Angel did to Elias: 'Arise and eat, for you have still a long way to go.' If you throw yourself into the ardent furnace of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the good Master will renew your youth like that of the eagle."

In the night the Mother General was seen gliding through the house to see with her own eyes whether some of the more delicate Sisters were sufficiently provided with all they wanted. Sometimes when nuns arrived from houses known to be poor, Mother Barat took care to replenish their slender stock of clothes, and tears often came into her eyes when she saw in their old, worn-out garments proofs of her daughters' courageous poverty. In case of illness she spared no pains to arrest a disease as soon as it appeared, and if necessary called in first-rate medical assistance. One of her daughters relates that Mother Barat would not be satisfied with consulting, as to her health, the ordinary physician of the house, but would insist on her seeing Dr. Cruveilhier, and answered when she protested against this and urged that the Mother General would not allow him to be called in to attend her, "Oh, I am so old that it is not worth while; but you who are young can work a long time for the glory of God, if he cures you."

If, on account of her advanced age, something more delicate than usual was provided for her, or some of the early produce of the garden, she stealthily concealed it under her habit, and secretly carried it to one of her sick nuns. "Take this, my child, and don't tell any one," she

would say, laughing at the trick she was playing on the Sister who was waiting upon her.

Her visits cheered the sick and made them forget their sufferings. Sometimes she sat hours by the bed-side of some poor sufferer. One day a novice who was ill with a slight fever saw the Mother General coming into her room, hardly able to walk from the state of her legs. "Is that you, Reverend Mother?" she exclaimed, quite astonished. "Do not say anything about it," Mother Barat answered; "I wanted to see if you had everything you wanted, so I contrived to creep up the stairs on my knees."

Her affectionate solicitude for the sorrows or anxieties of her spiritual daughters was not less keen. "I wish you," she said, "always to let me know when anything grieves you. If I cannot give you consolation, I can at any rate pray and get prayers for you."

She always took the greatest interest in the family ties of her nuns and the events which concerned their relations. It was one of her maxims that parents who have given their children to God ought to be rewarded a hundredfold even in this world. When misfortunes befell them, not only did she sympathize with their afflictions, but if possible she endeavoured to relieve them, and often we find her managing in the most discreet manner she could devise to return the sum they had given as a dowry to their daughters. In questions of inheritance she was equally generous. We find the following recommendation in a letter to a nun who had recently lost her mother: "Arrange everything in the way that will tend most to preserve family union and due esteem for the Society. That is all we care about and what we prize infinitely more than the few thousand francs that might devolve to us."

Spiritual trials above all others excited her affectionate commiseration, and no one knew better how to distil on such sufferings the holy balm of God's love.

If amongst her numerous family she could have had a preference, it would have been for the Lay-sisters. Often she said to them, "Oh, how I envy your little cap; I have asked for it often enough, but could not obtain it." She inquired one day of the Sister who had the charge of the poultry if she would like to change places with her, and added: "I feel as if I should never lose sight of the presence of God, if I had your office. How happy it would make me!" One day at noon she was found in the kitchen peeling potatoes and taking lessons of a Sister, to whom she said: "Show me how to do it, Sister, for I never can do anything well." Another time as she was passing through the part of the gardens of the Hotel Biron called "the field," she offered to supply the place of the Sister who looked after the cows whilst the latter cleaned the stable, and with a stick in her hand performed the office as if during her whole life she had never done anything else.

She said one day to the Lay-sisters, "Ah, we are reckoned the first here, but I am afraid that in the next world the order of precedency will be changed, and that many a Sister leading a hidden life and working in the sight of Jesus will have a higher place than us in Heaven." Sister Françoise hearing this exclaimed, "What, Reverend Mother, can I get such a place as that by only working in the kitchen?" "Yes, Françoise, you certainly can," was the answer, "and if you choose it you can have a better one than mine, for I do nothing, though I ought to give a good example."

Her orders were always given in a spirit of respectful consideration. They were not in fact orders, but requests. "Would you be kind enough, my dear Sister, to do such and such a thing?" or, "You would oblige me, my child, by doing so and so, if it would not tire you too much," or, "if you have time," or, "if it would not be incon-

venient;" and she even insisted, when occasion called for it, that others should be attended to before herself. Her thanks for the commonest attention were always given in the same spirit of humility and kindness. This used to touch so much a Lay-sister at the Villa Lante, a young girl from the Roman Campagna, that when Mother Barat went away she burst into tears and said: "Do you know that that holy Mother always begged me to do things; she never ordered me about. It was always 'Sister Angelica, could you gather a little grass?' when she might very well have said, '*Vattene all'erba.*'"

One day a Sister came with a dismal face to accuse herself of having broken a glass, which had already been injured. "Reverend Mother," she timidly said, "there was a star in it before." "And you, my child, have made it into a sun," was Madame Barat's playful answer. On another occasion when a Sister who was considered very stubborn was sent to her to be scolded, she gave her one of her gentle and penetrating looks and said: "My dear little Sister, I love you dearly;" and the incorrigible Sister declared that her conversion dated from that moment.

The death of Sister Marie who had waited upon her for fifteen years, and still more that of Sister Agnes in 1863, gave her the keenest sorrow. With tears and sobs she kept repeating during the night after the death of this humble friend, "I have lost my faithful companion;" and of all the trials which afflicted her old age, this was perhaps the one most bitter to her feelings.

So much charity in a Superior could not fail to win the affection of her children. No parent, no mother of a family was ever loved more than Madame Barat; and to this day, years after her death, this love is as strong and as universal as in the brightest days of her life. But we must not omit to add that this holy Superior always checked and repressed what was too vehement or too personal in

this filial affection, as derogatory to the supreme dominion of God over the heart of a religious. "We must never put anything," she used to say, "between our eyes and the eyes of Jesus, between our heart and His Heart." One day that her nuns were sitting round her, she exclaimed, "Oh, my children! how I love you! But I feel it right to add, you are not my God. My God is so great. But you are steps which help me to ascend to Him."

When Mother Barat had taken possession of the Feuillantines, she had declared that in that little nest she would live and die; but it happened to be situated in one of those parts of Paris where remodelment and reconstruction were decreed, and it then became absolutely necessary to look for another suitable house. After a fruitless search Madame Barat came to the determination of building one in that part of the gardens of the Hotel Biron furthest from the school and close to the Boulevard des Invalides. On the 29th of June the first stone of it was laid. In the meantime a small house was hired in the Rue Cassini, which could only just hold the Mothers Assistants and twelve to fifteen probanists.

The houses of the Sacred Heart were continuing to be asked for in every direction. Cardinal Pecci, now His Holiness Pope Leo XIII., during his residence as the Pope's Nuncio at Brussels had often visited the Convent of Jette-Saint-Pierre, and when he became Bishop of Perugia was already thinking of establishing the Institute of the Sacred Heart in that town, when Pius IX., then on a visit to him, confirmed the prelate in his resolution, and gave himself five hundred scudi for the first expenses,—"for the purchase of the cups and saucers," His Holiness said.

A wish expressed by the Holy Father was of course an order for Madame Barat. "The Vicar of Christ has spoken," she wrote to Madame Lehon. "I am confident that God will help us to carry out a mission recommended

to us by His representative on earth." On the 17th of November a colony from Rome went before its departure to get the Pope's blessing. "Go, my daughter," the Holy Father said to the Superior, "go and win souls for the Heart of Jesus, and do as much good as you possibly can in that country." The Revolution nipped this promising work in the bud.

In the following year the Society established itself in the Grand Duchy of Posen. Amongst those who were sent there was a Polish nun, Mother Pelagie Dziekonska, whose only fault seems to have been the excess of her enthusiasm for the Society and its Mother General, who addressed the following severe instructions to her: "When questions are put to you about the Society, I beg that your answers may be humble and modest, and that a sense of inferiority to other religious orders, which have all laboured more than we have done as yet, should be expressed; that the number of our houses should not be put forward. It is easy to elude questions on that point; above all things, there must not be anything said about Superiors, or the name of the Foundress used, for it is a vain usurpation. I reckon on being obeyed about this, for I hold to it very much."

Mother Hardey, Vicar of Eastern America, began in 1858 a foundation at Havannah. A house was established at Chicago in 1858, and in 1859 at Chamartin-de-la-Rosa, near Madrid. This place owed its appellation to the hedges of roses which surround it on every side. Situated like an oasis in the midst of the barren plains of Castile, it was built amongst beautiful trees and delightfully cool. The Mother Vicar for the South would have liked to buy this property. The Duke de Pastrana, to whom it belonged, was sounded on the subject, and answered with Castillian pride, that Chamartin was not to be sold. But when he heard that the Nuns of the Sacred Heart wanted to pur

chase it, "If that is the case," he said, "I should like to *give* it to them." Thus an excellent house, well furnished, with twenty-seven acres of land, and surrounded by walls, was made over simply as a gift to the Sacred Heart, and that in the kindest and most generous manner possible.

By the end of October, 1858, the new mother-house was in a condition to receive the probanists, and on the feast of the Dedication of the Churches, November 7th, Mother Barat came to reside there. She had no longer strength to travel about, and the Superior Vicars supplied her place by visiting the communities under their care. The Superior General continued to govern the Society by a laborious correspondence. The letters she received every morning were so numerous, that the postman could not sometimes refrain from saying, "Here is plenty of work for that lady! I pity her if she has to write to all the people who write to her." She did answer every one of those letters. During the whole of the morning, and sometimes all the evening, her pen was at work, and those who watched her earnest and animated countenance, could observe the various expressions which marked it, as sheet after sheet of paper was covered with her rapid and firm hand-writing. From time to time she gave herself a few minutes of rest near our Lord in the chapel. In some of her letters we find these words: "I shorten what I have to say, my dear child, as I want to go and pray a little." When on her way to the chapel she seemed rather to fly than to walk, the loving impulse was so strong. But generally she contented herself with earnestly pressing in her hand her cross, which was her constant habit, or else raising her eyes to the crucifix, as if to seek there light and strength. She was continually interrupted, and in one of her letters she said: "I wish I could, like Cæsar, do four things at once. Two I am often obliged to accomplish at the same time, writing and listening, and that is already

too much for my poor capacity, so I hope you will read my letter with indulgence."

There was, of course, no time for study or art in this rapid correspondence. It was the spontaneous outpouring of a wonderful soul, which, whatever might be the subject treated of, referred every feeling and every word to our Lord.

The first point in the organization of a religious order lies in the choice of superiors and principal officials. This duty the Mother General considered a profoundly holy one. She never made an appointment of that kind without consulting, meditating, and praying. It was before the tabernacle that the Mother General regulated all the affairs of the Society.

As to temporal affairs, she wished them to be considered as a part of the work done for God, and always inculcated a religious integrity in all matters of business. She wrote to a procuratrix: "You must not make the least delay in paying your workmen. Winter is coming on, and poor people suffer twice as much from the badness of the times if they do not receive their wages at once. I could never make up my mind to let a workman wait for his money, and this for two simple reasons. To attempt something beyond our means is a fault against prudence and also against justice. The cross of being in debt is the most painful one our Lord could lay upon me."

She strenuously maintained a spirit of humility and poverty in the administration as well as in the direction of her Society, in little things as well as in great things, and wished to exclude from all its houses what savoured of luxury, magnificence, or even art. "I must tell you, my child," she wrote to one of her nuns who was making a foundation," that your ideas are thought too grand. Your parlours are not simple enough. People say that your pupils will get used to a style of house which will tend

to make them dissatisfied with their simple country homes." She reproved severely a Superior who had allowed a fine portico and a stone colonnade to be built for the house at Chambéry. At Montigny, near Metz, she stopped at once a building begun in a handsome Gothic style, and in spite of the incongruous effect produced, insisted on its being finished in a plain manner. Numerous facts of this kind are on record. "I should prefer," she said, "that this little Society, which God has visibly blessed, should cease to exist, than that the spirit of poverty should decrease in it, for this is the curse of communities."

Deviations from the spirit of the Institute she could never be brought to tolerate. Once the nuns of a community which she was visiting presented to her a magnificent piece of embroidery which they had worked themselves, but at the cost of many an hour which ought to have been devoted to sacred duties of obligation. Mother Barat knew that this had been the case, and she began by speaking strongly about poverty and the humble labours of our Lord. Laying her hand on the unhappy offering, she said: "My dear children, we must therefore tear up this work or else tear up our Constitutions." The sentence was carried into execution, and as she began the work of destruction, she exclaimed: "Thus may everything perish which would vitiate the spirit of our Institute."

But together with the love of prudence, justice, economy, and poverty, she had a most generous and liberal spirit. There was nothing mean, petty, or narrow in her views. As soon as she perceived or even suspected that any of her communities were suffering from pecuniary wants, she gave them large sums, she sent them furniture, clothes, whatever seemed most needed. Her love of giving was intense, and her way of giving made a gift doubly welcome. For instance, to a Superior of a new foundation she writes: "I am sure that it is out of discretion that you do not

ask me for anything. I am afraid that you are suffering from cold, and that you do not eat enough. This would be entirely against my wishes. I will send you a thousand francs more as soon as I can. You must not deprive yourself of necessaries; your strength must be kept up." Once she said to a Superior who had owned that she could not sleep at night on account of her anxiety about debts, "Seek first the kingdom of God and His justice, my child, and all these things will be added to you;" and then when she was going away on the following day she exclaimed: "I should really like to give you good nights by paying your debts. I wish I could pay them all;" and at once she gave her a sum of fourteen thousand francs, adding that if in the course of five months her house was still in the same difficulties she would contrive to relieve her from that embarrassment. "You will have plenty of sufferings," she kindly said, "which I shall not be able so easily to relieve." "A Superior," she was wont to say, "must be the cross-bearer of her community;" and well did she give the example of this spirit in the good of her whole Society. Her instructions varied according to the characters of her daughters. To some of them she wrote: "That in this effeminate age discipline cannot be maintained without Christian energy; that a house governed with too loose a rein was on the brink of ruin, and that always to throw a veil over faults is to hide fire under ashes, and to prepare the way for an inevitable explosion." To others she said: "Our Lord likes us to exceed on the side of indulgence. O dear Lord Jesus Christ! where should we be, if Thou hadst been severe with us?" She was always advising Superiors to be calm, not to speak much, not to be over-active, to exert influence rather than exercise authority, to leave each member of the community her own work to do, without absorbing everything themselves; to take pains to train those under their care, to avoid commotion, to be

regular and concise in their method of direction, and, like good shepherds, noiselessly to watch over their flock. She summed up these instructions by saying "that women must be looked after as the angels look after us, that is, invisibly and imperceptibly."

Mother Barat was thus unconsciously describing herself and her mode of government.

CHAPTER XIII.

Mother Barat's exterior direction. Two of her Pupils in the World.

Madame Barat's influence was not limited to the sphere of her communities, or even of her schools. She remained the Mother of her pupils after their education was finished. Two striking and strongly contrasted examples will illustrate the nature of the apostolate which she carried on among the young women in the world who had been brought up in her convents. We have already mentioned in the first chapters of this history the name of Caroline de Beauffort, one of the first pupils of the house at Amiens, and have likewise seen how, at a subsequent period, after she had become Countess de la Grandville, and was living at Lille, she promoted the establishment of the Sacred Heart in that town and in Belgium.

From the time that this young girl left the school of Amiens, Mother Barat never lost sight of her. "Constancy in my affections," she wrote to this dear pupil, "is the only good quality for which I am noted. I believe that this arises from my not easily engaging in intimacies." And in another letter she gives the supernatural reason for her attachment to Mdlle. de Beauffort. "Could we ever forget a pupil of the Sacred Heart, who has made up her mind to save her soul at any cost and to become a saint?"

For forty years Madame Barat carried on a correspondence with this lady which shows how incessantly all

the warmth of her heart and the superiority of her mind were employed in strengthening her in her trials and encouraging her in her struggles.

As long as Caroline lived in the house of her father, the Marquis de Beauffort, who was Mayor of Nancy, and under the care of her mother, Léopoldine de Merode, as long as she had been appreciated, admired, and flattered by a distinguished society, her letters to Mother Barat had been few and far between. She was happy at that time. Her mind and her talents were far above the common order. She was devoted to art and to literature, and was conversant with foreign languages. She even studied the classics, and one of her biographers attributes the energy and heroism which were combined in her character with an intense sensibility, to her intimate knowledge of the thoughts and writings of the greatest men of former ages. But everything changed when, after her marriage with the Count de la Grandville, she found herself deprived of all the social and intellectual enjoyments she had so highly prized, and banished, as it were, to Lille, or to the Chateau de Beaucamps, at three miles distance from that town. Her feelings had not been consulted by her parents with regard to her marriage, only the convenience of her own and her husband's family, and though the Count de la Grandville was a good and kind man, Caroline, very superior to her husband in character and mind, could not find happiness in this union. The life she led in the house of her father-in-law was anything but a happy one. She had no children, and feeling deeply after some years the separation from her parents and the cheerless solitude of her existence, she turned to the guide of her childhood for aid and consolation.

Mother Barat, before advising the young Countess, began by sympathizing with her. "Your letter," she wrote to her, "deeply affected me. If I had been alone I believe I

should have cried over the remembrance of your childhood, and the thought of your present position and my own inability to contribute to your happiness, which I so earnestly desire. I am so grieved about you, my dear Caroline, and yet I feel that your resignation and your struggles endear you to our Lord. Be very faithful. Take up and bear your cross with courage. Jesus will help you to carry it. I even hope and believe He will lighten it."

Disappointed with the world, and only comforted by the ties which bound her to her Christian friends, it naturally happened that Madame de la Grandville indulged in regrets for the religious life to which she had at one time thought herself called, but Mother Barat considered it right to check those vain and therefore dangerous longings. "In your state of life," she wrote to her, "you can love and serve God with more perfection and purity of heart than nuns often do. Most of the saints God has made use of to carry on great works, even in religion, have begun by being married. Try then to advance in perfection, with peace and resignation to God's will, Who if He has chosen to call you to a less perfect state, has done so for the very purpose that you should excel in true and deep humility."

Father Varin cooperated in the direction of this much tried soul. "He is the only person," Madame Barat says, "to whom I show your letters, that he may think of you and pray for you." And again, "Father Varin likes to hear of my dear child, and when he sighs I know what are his thoughts; he prays very earnestly for his spiritual daughter. Every time I mention your name, he raises his eyes to Heaven, and I can see how much he feels for you. That good and true friend is going to write to you a few words of encouragement." If Father Varin's letters to his penitent and those she wrote to him and Madame Barat had been preserved, we should have seen touching proofs of the way in which religion can soften the most acute sorrows of

domestic life. The Mother General's letters are in themselves an admirable course of practical instructions to a young woman exposed to the dangers of the world.

Madame de la Grandville did not seek worldly homage, but it was spontaneously paid to her. Her cleverness, her goodness, her generous warmheartedness, the need she felt of sympathy and kindness, joined to an irresistible charm of manner, sometimes attracted people to her, and the admiration she excited, to a certain degree disquieted her own heart and interfered with her peace of mind.

Mother Barat fully understood the danger of this state of things, and would have wished to be near her spiritual daughter to guard her against them. "My dear Caroline," she wrote, "would I could spend some hours with you. How many sad and consoling things we should have to talk about, ending always with these blessed words, 'God is good.'" At any rate, by her letters she tried to warn and guide her much-loved pupil. "You are still too much influenced," she tells her, "by the things of this world. This is not extraordinary, for you are obliged to live in it; try by degrees to detach yourself from earthly cares, but in a way that will not excite observation." Earnestly she begged of her at any cost to attach herself to her new home. She had given her as a maxim the words, "God alone and your duty," and added, "by that I mean your duty to God and your family." She urged her to remain under the roof of her husband's parents. Madame de la Grandville would have liked to take advantage of an opportunity of living at Nancy near her own relatives. Mother Barat strongly objected to this plan, which she thought a dereliction of duty. "Better to endure a long and painful martyrdom," she wrote, "it will in any case end with your life," and we may hope it will serve to sanctify you. God, Who sees the extent of this sacrifice, will strengthen you, and will not allow your soul to suffer from it. Above all, my dear

Caroline, do not give way to discouragement and low spirits. Your health will fail if you abandon yourself to sorrow and dejection. If it is God's will that you should find nothing but disappointment and bitterness in your intercourse with those whom it is your duty to love, accept His will. Bear with them, love them from a sense of duty. And love Him above all things."

But by that time what Mother Barat apprehended had already happened. Most serious fears were entertained as to the health of the young Countess. The Mother General asked for prayers in every direction. A novena was made for her in the house at Paris. She recommended her dear child to Prince Hohenlohe, the great miracle-worker of that day; and at the tomb of the holy Aloysia at Grenoble, where she was in 1823, petitioned earnestly for her recovery. Over and over again she wrote letters of hope or of consolation to the invalid who, according to a prevalent idea in France, was living in the cow-house of the chateau in order to inhale the breath of those animals, supposed to be curative in cases of chest complaint. At times she mingled with those consolations words evidently intended to prepare her to whom they were addressed for the end which at that time seemed near at hand, but such was not the case. The Countess de la Grandville went to Italy, and found so much benefit from the change of scene, and the beautiful, the artistic, and the religious enjoyments of that journey, that she returned to France with improved health. Useful reminiscences and notes of her journey furnished materials for a remarkable work which appeared under the title of *Souvenirs de Voyage.* Mother Barat's prayers had accompanied her during this journey, and their correspondence was renewed when the young Countess returned to the Chateau de Beaucamps, where "the cross had followed her and abided with her."

But Madame de la Grandville was determined at any

cost not to offend God. Her friend knew it, and encouraged her by such words as these: "Your letter has cheered me, my child. You are all that I wished and thought you capable of being—noble-hearted, generous, solidly and reasonably devout, and endowed with the sort of faith that would enable us to suffer martyrdom, were we happy enough to be offered that privilege." Another time she wrote: "I have long besought our Lord to despoil you of everything short of Himself, and to enable you to find neither peace nor happiness but in Him alone, according to those words of St. Augustine: *Fecisti nos ad te Deus, et irrequietum est cor nostrum donec requiescat in te.** You will enter into the feelings of that saint for whom you have so much admiration and sympathy." And in another letter: "Be courageous, my child, and God will have mercy on you. If your friends feel for you and are grieved at your sorrows, how much more will the compassionate Heart of Jesus look tenderly on your sufferings? Love Him more than any creature. Fear above all things to displease Him. Let that be your constant rule."

Mother Barat had sometimes to appeal to the heart, sometimes to the conscience of Madame de la Grandville, and made use of every circumstance in her life which she could turn to account for the purpose of strengthening and sustaining her amidst the temptations and difficulties of a singularly trying position. In 1832 she wrote to her friend: "At your age you have still to fight against those natural gifts which, in spite of your own wishes, lead others away from the Sovereign Good. Oh! if they would but remember that those gifts which they admire are but tiny emanations of God's infinite perfections, how they would appreciate His boundless excellence, and love Him far more than His creatures." And later on she says: "Now that age has

* "Thou hast made us for Thee, O God, and our heart is restless until it reposes in Thee."

calmed the vehemence of your affections, fix them entirely on the Sovereign Good, and do not let creatures stand in the way of your attainment of that great and exalted end; let them be only stepping-stones which help you to ascend to Him. This was your Creator's object when He gave you so many gifts and the power of attracting souls to His love." "Without intending it, you are a snare for souls sighing after happiness and attracted by the charm of virtue. This being the case, virtue must be in you very pure and austere. You become too easily intimate with people. In your character and in your manners there is a freedom from constraint and an unaffected eagerness which renders you attractive. Try to conceal from the eyes of men qualities which make even good people too fond of you. It is time, my dear child, that you should practice greater reserve, and evince in your manners that purity, delicacy, and uprightness which really exist in your soul. Give your whole heart to God, and love only in Him those you ought to love. Be prudent, firm, and courageous. Be like a rock in the midst of a stormy sea; keep out of the way of danger. Trust in God's help, not in the mere fact that you are growing older. It is God alone that your soul needs. Do not seek for compensation in the affection of creatures."

At a time when the Marquis de Beauffort, the beloved father of her friend, was lying in a hopeless state on a bed of pain, Madame Barat wrote as follows to the heart-broken daughter: "How I pity you, my dear child! but on the other hand, how many graces God bestows on your good father. He is now receiving the reward of his virtuous life. My dear child, do not grudge him the happiness he will soon attain! Accept this sorrow, and live on to practise amidst your relatives the virtues of that dear parent." After the news of the Marquis' death had reached her, she said: "My dear daughter—for now that your father is in Heaven

I feel more than ever that I am your mother—think how short, after all, will be this separation. A few years more and you will be with him again. You are at the eve of that happy day; for what are even centuries by the side of eternity?"

After the Countess had lost her sister, the same affectionate solicitude was expressed. "I heard at Turin of the sad unexpected death of your sister Pauline: I feel convinced that God has received her in the abode of eternal bliss. You will be a mother to her children. Pray very earnestly for the grace of the Holy Ghost, that you may bring them up in the fear and love of God. Oh, my dear child, everything is comprised in that—nothing else signifies."

When Madame de la Grandville's father-in-law had departed this life, Mother Barat suggested thoughts which bore ample fruit in the sequel. "This death will make you realize more than ever your isolation. Alone with your husband you will feel in a stronger manner the absence of real companionship. But as a Christian heroine you will more than ever evince great patience and gentleness. You will supply to him the place of his father, and now that your fortune is increased you can enjoy the happiness of doing more good. This will be a solace which such a heart as yours will gladly accept. You will help those who seek your aid; you will be the consolation of the afflicted, the providence of the destitute, and the prop of your family. These virtues, if calmly practised and in a spirit of faith, will gradually be shorn of that excess of merely natural tenderness which exhausts and tortures you."

Under this wise and prudent direction, Madame de la Grandville devoted herself to good works with all the energy and zeal of her ardent character. Deprived by God's will of the happiness of having children of her own, she made for herself a family composed of sufferers of every sort. It

is difficult to give an idea of all she did for the Church and for the poor.

Before the Revolution an ancient place of pilgrimage, called Notre Dame de Grâce, had existed at Loos, near Lille. But the church had been destroyed, and the faithful no longer frequented the spot. Madame Barat's pupil undertook the work, and Notre Dame de Grâce rose from its ruins. When, in 1832, the cholera raged in the village of Beaucamps, Madame de la Grandville bought a house, which she turned into an hospital. Gathering all the sick under its roof, she nursed them herself with the assistance of the Sisters of the Child Jesus, and thus saved the lives of many. When the epidemic disappeared the community remained in the house, and opened a poor school for girls. A boarding-school was subsequently added to this establishment, and the Marist Brothers called to begin one for boys. In 1850 the novitiate of that congregation, which at this moment imparts Christian education to fifteen thousand children all over the world, was instituted in the same place. In her estate at Boisgrenier she transformed the chapel of the hamlet into a parish church. At Lille she contributed considerably to the foundation of a house of the Good Shepherd, and established a refuge for penitents at Loos. Half of her house and the whole of her garden at Lille she gave to the Jesuits to build a church, and the patronage work established by those Fathers is partly due to her assistance. And then her truly Catholic charity turned to the foreign missions. She herself bought a ship destined to navigate in the seas of Oceanica, and made a present of it to Mgr. Bataillon, Bishop of those islands. Such was the response made by the worthy daughter of Madame Barat to her spiritual mother's exhortations.

It was a great delight to the Superior General in her visits to Lille to witness all these good works, many of which were owing to her suggestion. Sometimes she had

to cheer Madame de la Grandville, and guard her against discouragement when her charitable efforts met with an amount of opposition not unfrequently offered in our days to similar undertakings. "What a life," she says, "you are leading, always anxious, always travelling, carrying about your cross, and Providence adding to it those of others! God has given you both depth of feeling and strength of character. These gifts make weaker souls look up to you, and oblige you, as it were, to guide and to support them. It is a holy and noble thing to use this power of influence in saving souls, and preserving them from the snares that beset them." If Madame de la Grandville complained to Mother Barat of the inconceivable ingratitude with which she was sometimes treated by those on whom she lavished benefits, she was told by that true friend to forget it, to look only to eternity, and, like the angels, to help others without expecting gratitude.

This unwearied solicitude accomplished its work. It is evident, by a letter written in 1840, that a great change had taken place in the soul so devotedly cared for: "Does your soul still enjoy the same complete peace? Are you faithful to all that God requires of you? You will never find any happiness except in the love of the Supreme Being. You relieve every kind of distress, you are continually conferring benefits upon others. Such is the continual employment of your life; but your heart must be devoted to Jesus alone. Consecrate to Him all your remaining years. He has showered so many graces upon your soul that it owes Him this return. You are His beloved daughter. Final separation from everything earthly is at hand. The torrent of time will soon carry us away into the ocean of eternity."

Madame de la Grandville's life was still to be a long one, for twenty-five years more she lived at her Château de Beaucamps as in a sanctuary. Mother Barat exhorted

her to separate herself from everything useless, everything unconnected with God and His glory: "No one will be surprised," she said to her, "at your wishing for more solitude. If you must devote some of your time to your relatives, at least assign every day to prayer, to rest, and to pious reading, hours when no one will intrude upon you." In this secluded life and constant communion with God she continually advanced in holiness. A priest once said of her that in the cloister she would have been another St. Theresa. She felt that her good Mother, for she always gave that name to Madame Barat, had been the means of saving her soul. On the other hand the Mother General called this child of hers *her only daughter*, for she was the only person outside the community, with whom she maintained a constant intercourse and intimate friendship. For many years Madame de la Grandville spent the winters in Paris, and then they met often and with mutual edification.

The last letter she wrote to her was dated June, 1860. "For many and many a year," she wrote, "the intimate outpourings of my dear Caroline's heart have been one of the joys of my life. But there comes a time when such sensible enjoyments must be sacrificed, and a real affection grows even purer and stronger when deprived of them. Now, my dear child, fulfil your mission and help me by your prayers. Let us go on doing all the good, such as it may be, which God requires of us, and the more obstacles we meet with so much the more let us trust in Him. Souls saved! What a ground for hope at the hour of death. Then, dear friend, you will receive the reward of your zeal, the recompense of your long efforts, and like the valiant woman, you will laugh in that last hour." Madame de la Grandville died just four months after Mother Barat. Her end was holy, peaceful, and sweet, and her last moments, cheered by the blessing of Pius IX., whom she

had largely assisted in his misfortunes, and the hope of meeting her beloved friend in Heaven.

In this instance of spiritual direction, the Mother and the daughter were worthy of one another. We will now describe the dealings of the servant of God with a completely different soul, and witness in Mother Barat's long and patient struggles to win over to God a hard, proud, and perverse being, the triumph of her saintly spirit of persevering charity.

In the course of the year 1842, two women met on the high road near Valence a young girl, apparently about sixteen or eighteen years of age, whose language they could not understand, but fancying that she must have come from Marseilles, they asked a boatman to convey her to that city. No one, however, could be found there who had seen her before or who could make out what she said. Her appearance, her manner, her rather masculine features and projecting cheekbones led to the supposition that she belonged to some wandering tribe of Bohemians or was of Russian origin. The police made useless investigations, public attention was excited, the newspapers of the day published the fact with various romantic embellishments, and a Russian Countess in Paris, who fancied that this girl would prove a countrywoman of her own, went to Marseilles on purpose to see her. But neither could she understand the language spoken by the stranger. She was going away when the girl clung to her dress and looked at her in so supplicating a manner that the Countess made up her mind to take her with her to Paris. She offered to pay a pension for her at the Sacred Heart, where she was accordingly received. The young girl learnt to speak French and was taught the elementary truths of religion, of which she was so ignorant that she had never even heard of the existence of God. When sufficiently instructed she was baptized, and made her first Communion on the 17th of May, 1844.

Meanwhile her benefactress was making every sort of inquiry in order to discover the family of this poor wanderer. But these efforts proving unsuccessful, and suspecting the truth of the girl's account of herself, she gave her up and declared that henceforward she would have nothing more to say to her.

Mother Barat then took under her care this forsaken creature, with a zeal which nothing but supernatural motives could have awakened, for every sort of bad quality was soon evinced by this wild, strange girl. Although gifted with a wonderful power of memory and imagination, her reasoning powers were weak and her character deceitful, mean, and selfish. Thanks to Mother Barat's vigilance, her prayers and exhortations, she did not fall into gross sins, but the instincts of this child of heathen parents were low and bad. She had declared at that time that her father was a Kalmuck Tartar and her mother a Persian. To tame, to convert, and to save her, at any rate from perdition, was the task Madame Barat undertook. For that purpose she, as it were, adopted the stranger, who was called at the Sacred Heart "Mother Barat's Julia." More than two hundred letters addressed to this extraordinary being remain as a proof of the most heroic perseverance with which a spiritual mother ever devoted herself to the salvation of a wayward child.

Of all vices the one most opposed to her own spirit of sanctity was that of pride, and in this instance she had to deal with a soul possessed of it to a frightful degree. The following description will give an idea of it. One well acquainted with this Julia wrote: "She was not like any one in our part of the world, and her defects which proceeded mostly from an overweening pride could only be restrained by the power which eminent sanctity exercises over even the most rebellious natures. Several successive teachers tried to educate her, but utterly failed in sub-

duing or guiding that indomitable and wayward soul; there was a coarseness and at the same time a cunning about her which baffled and eluded all attempts at control. Her only object was to gain her ends, and falsehood her constant resource. In no two instances did she ever give a similar account of her past history, and the declaration which she had to make before a magistrate at the time of her marriage was found to be as false as all her previous statements. The only dogma of religion which made any impression upon her was that of Hell, and the fear of it the only motive which touched her conscience. She used to say to her mistress, 'Why do you take so much trouble to make those young ladies advance in perfection? Save me if you can; prevent me from losing my soul. This is much more essential.' When she was in one of her fits of fury or of spite there was nothing she did not scruple to utter, even calumnies against the Sacred Heart, even accusations against Madame Barat, and yet no one but that saintly Mother had the power of soothing her. It used to remind one of our Lord's calming the poor wretches possessed by the devil, to see the infuriated girl rush to our Mother's feet in her moments of passion and quiet herself in her presence. When our Reverend Mother came into the garden after despatching her letters, Julia used to dart out of the bushes, and accosting her without ceremony showed the birds she had caught by climbing up the trees, or the flowers she had gathered to the destruction of the *parterre*." Mother Barat was always ready to talk to her, took her into her room, gave her sweet things to eat, and all sorts of presents to pave the way for a reproof or an exhortation. During her journeys and absences in foreign countries, and even when she was in retreat, the Mother General wrote to Julia and to others about her, inquiring as to her studies, her needs, and especially the state of her soul. It seemed difficult to account for this strange predi-

lection, which in the eyes of many was a weakness, but in which we cannot but admire the triumph of the Divine strength of charity.

In 1845 Julia was placed at the Sacred Heart at Beauvais, and then began a correspondence with her and about her, the like of which has probably never been seen in the annals of education. Mother Barat did not flatter the child she was trying to save. She vigorously attacks the enemies of her soul. "You know that I have always told you that if you do not become humble you will always be headstrong and wilful, and these defects lead to wickedness, injustice, and ingratitude. It is a terrible misfortune to be governed by pride! May God preserve you from it, my dear child!" Indulgent as she was, her reproaches were often severe. At each oft-repeated offence she placed before the perverse girl the whole extent of her guilt and the danger of her soul, and insisted on her owning her faults and going through the humiliation of seeking forgiveness from her patient and much-tried mistresses. One day she wrote: "You must think of this, my dear Julia, I hope that the goodness of your heart will lead you to make a sincere act of reparation towards those whom you have offended; in that case alone can I continue to be your friend." And another time she says: "Your letter grieves me. I find in it all that obstinate and revengeful pride which is utterly opposed to the spirit of Jesus Christ, that dear Lord Whose goodness to you has been so great. You are ungrateful to Him and to us, and if you do not amend, your fate will be a very unhappy one. Think over this, my child, and try hard to become a gentle lamb instead of the savage little wolf which you are at this moment."

It was difficult to awaken the moral sense in this uncultivated conscience, and Mother Barat was obliged to dwell continually upon the themes of eternal perdition and Hell. Sometimes she tried to appeal to Julia's feelings:

"I am quite ready to grant the forgiveness you ask, but I must tell you that your conduct has deeply grieved me. I am not morally or physically in a state to cope with it, my thoughts have been so painfully occupied about you that I have not been able to sleep. It is so difficult to understand how with two ways open before you, one which would secure your happiness in this world and above all in the next, you will choose the other which will make you more miserable than you ever can imagine and lead you to perdition."

But besides awakening a dormant conscience, the patient Mother's object was to call forth in that proud hard heart some feelings of affection. She spared neither kindness nor gifts for this purpose, and tried to make Julia's teachers at Paris and at Beauvais follow the same plan. She wrote to one of them: "People expect too much from Julia, they really require of her the perfection of a consummate religious, and the dear child has suffered from this." She wrote as follows to her perverse daughter on one of the anniversaries of her first Communion: "Have you thanked our Lord on this Sunday for the innumerable blessings you have received from that truly Good Shepherd? You were one of the sheep wandering outside the fold; that good Master called you by your name and lodged you in one of the most privileged spots in His domain. And now, my child, are you a gentle and obedient lamb?" And another time she says: "Do love our Lord, you owe Him so much. He has loved you first and so tenderly watched over you. You love Mary; oh, my dear child, try to imitate her virtues; she the most perfect was the most humble of all creatures. And you, with all your faults, you cannot put up with a slight." And then we find her, the venerable Mother Barat, actually recommending herself to Julia's prayers and promising to pray for her in return.

In 1852 Julia was sent to America, in hopes that she might turn to account her talent for painting. Thanks to the indefatigable pains of one of her teachers, Mother Perdrau, she had learnt to copy pictures well enough to secure for herself sufficient means of support. But no sooner had she arrived at Manhattanville, than she began to astonish her benefactress by her impertinence, her ingratitude, and her duplicity. After a very short time, she requested the Mother General to let her return to France. Mother Barat wrote in answer letters full of kindness and encouragement, in which she advised her to go on painting, and promised to find purchasers for her pictures in the houses of Northern and Southern America. She thus ends one of those letters: "I often think of you, my dear Julia, in my walks in the garden at Conflans, and especially in my tribune, where you liked so much to come and see your Mother, and to tell her of your faults and your sorrows. I beg of our Divine Master to take care of you as I used to do." To the nuns of the Sacred Heart at Manhattanville she wrote: "I am so anxious about that soul; I hoped the poor child would find a destiny in that New World where so many poor people find means of support, but our poor Julia is a sad exception." Then shortly afterwards gentle remonstrances are addressed to her absent child. "I was sorry to find in your letter words which are far from being written in a gentle and humble spirit. Alas! my poor Julia, you forget that you have sinned, and that in this world or in the next we must expiate our offences. God grant that you may save your soul; that is my great anxiety. Pray and go often to Holy Communion. Oh, how much you ought to value, to love, and to seek the privilege of communicating! You have so great a need of the sacraments. Farewell, my child, I am sorry to lay down my pen, but my heart never forgets you." Julia came back to France, and was placed at Conflans under the care of the

gentle Mother Gœtz, whose sweetness of manner ought to have subdued her perversity, but insolence and calumny were the only treatment she received in return for all her efforts to conciliate this strange girl. Everybody gave her up, disgusted with her conduct, except Madame Barat. Still bent on saving her, she kept not only writing to Julia, but sending her presents, one day a shawl, another a new bonnet, once a gold watch. To make a way into her heart for God was the daily study of that Mother General on whom the burthen of more than a hundred communities rested. A parent could not have written more tenderly to a wayward child. "Your little nosegay of violets stands before my Blessed Virgin," she tells her; "may Mary obtain for my daughter the virtue of humility, of which that flower is the emblem. Then you would be happy, and I should be happy too. Jesus will hear my prayers. I hope you will love Him at last. He has done so much for you. I am growing old. What will become of you when I die?" She paid her a pension of eight hundred francs a year, which would have enabled her, together with the sale of her pictures and her fancy work, to live comfortably; but she, poor wild creature, hated work, and would never remain in the same place. She went to Tours, to Besançon, to Versailles, and back again to Paris, always returning to her indulgent Mother to be forgiven and comforted. A rule of life had been given her, and strenuous advice to be careful in the choice of her friends, and in avoiding the society of men. Madame Barat warned her on one occasion of the danger she was running of losing her only treasure, a good reputation. Love of dress seized the unfortunate girl, and she sold her watch, the Mother General's present, in order to buy a ball-dress. Soon she left off prayer, and ceased to frequent the sacraments. "What an account you will have to render to the Supreme Judge!" Mother Barat exclaims in one of her letters, in which she threatens to withdraw

her pension, and no longer to be her Mother. Then Julia falls into a passion, and writes to her benefactress letters such as Mother Barat had never in her life received from anybody. Everything seems at an end between them.

But no sooner did the prodigal child feel the pressure of want, than remorse returned. At the first sign of repentance she was called to Conflans to be forgiven, and reconciled to God in a retreat, during which the Mother General wrote as follows: "My dear Julia, you must at last think of your salvation. If you go on leading this wandering and idle life you will risk your eternity. It is time to make up for the past. You are now making efforts, they must be persevering; you must advance now in virtue, otherwise you are a Christian only in name. It is only by dint of efforts that Heaven can be won. Life is short, eternity long. We shall meet again if you are faithful."

In the following year, 1860, Julia was married. At that time Mother Barat "really felt satisfied and hopeful about her in every respect." She did not arrange this marriage, as some people supposed, and incurred no responsibility with regard to it; but when Julia's intended husband came to see her, it was with great pleasure that she heard of her prospects. "I am convinced," she wrote to her, "that it is a Providential event in your life, and affords every hope of happiness such as I have desired for you. I am drawing near to my end, for even supposing the father of lies prophesied truly,* five years are soon elapsed, and I should have departed this life with a feeling of anxiety about you, had not your future been thus decided. Now I am easy on that subject. You will have a friend and a guide in your husband; his religious principles and his respect for all his

* This is an allusion to a prediction made by a gipsy with regard to Mother Barat when she was a very little girl. "Look at that child," she said, "she will play a great part in the world, and will live to be eighty-five." Mother Barat, in her old age, used sometimes to speak of this announcement, which was so exactly verified.

duties afford every ground of security. You will be as happy as is possible in this world, and you will save your soul." This hope seemed to increase for awhile, and her letters to Julia were full of expressions of gratitude joined to the most admirable advice. On the day of the marriage she went to Communion for those she called her two children, and sent them her blessing.

Madame Barat fancied at that moment that her work was ended, whilst on the contrary it was about to become more arduous and painful than ever. During the five remaining years of her life, one of the severest crosses she endured was the sad contrast between those whose union she had so joyfully hailed. On the one side a more honourable, hard-working, kind-hearted man could not be found than Julia's husband, or one who strove with greater self-devotion to make his wife happy; whilst on the other hand, that unworthy wife, by her idleness, her pride, her violent temper, and even her drunken habits, made her home a scene of violence and tears, and brought upon it poverty and scandal, almost amounting to disgrace. "My heart bleeds when I think of you," Mother Barat exclaims: "I have been so long in the habit of caring for you, that I cannot keep my thoughts from what makes me suffer so terribly." And oftener than ever during those last years she wrote, and pleaded, and threatened, and clung to that soul with a sort of desperate resolution to save her in despite of herself, to draw her back from the abyss which in the light of faith she showed her opening under her feet. "Your passions are driving you to destruction. What have you done with the teachings of the past? Have all those years spent in the Sacred Heart, in the midst of so many graces and blessings, ended in these sad and disgraceful results? What a shame for you, what a disgrace for us! And what will become of you? You will die one day, and what will be your eternity? Such as your life, alas!"

For awhile she affected to forget this unworthy object of her care, but as she said herself, only as God does when a soul rejects Him and He continues to pity it, to do it good and to hope for its return. The ungrateful woman, astonished at such persevering kindness, shuddered at the prospect before her, and expressed repentance. Immediately Mother Barat sent for her, opened her arms to her, called her her daughter, received her at the Sacred Heart to make her peace with God, and started her again in the good path, watching continually over her steps. This occurred over and over again during those five years. Mother Barat was ready to forgive seventy times seven. A few days before her death, on the 28th of April, 1865, she wrote to Julia this last farewell: "I should like to see you once more in this world, and it will probably be for the last time, for my end is approaching. I feel life abandoning me. You are young, but do not forget that the longest earthly existence is short, compared with eternity. Can there be a greater folly than to employ it in false pleasures? You have assured me that you have amended your life, but be very careful not to fall again. Oh, no! an upward glance to that Heaven which you would be in danger of losing, and the remembrance of your Mother, will stop you on the brink of the precipice. Farewell, my dear Julia, I shall love you more and more if you are faithful." Julia did not long survive Madame Barat; she died in September, 1872, and thanks to her excellent and Christian husband, who seemed to have acquired in his frequent conversations with his wife's holy benefactress an equally ardent zeal for the salvation of her soul, her end was pious and edifying. As soon as she heard that she was in danger, she made a general confession, and received the last sacraments. If ever there was a sheep perseveringly sought after in her wanderings, it was this child of Mother Barat's, and great must have been her joy in Heaven at her repentance and

return, greater even than over that large number of faithful sheep in the immense fold which God had committed to her care.

Mother Barat's last days were saddened by events which every servant of God mourned over at the time and of which the Church and her Society are still experiencing the ever-increasing miserable results. When the French armies crossed the Alps in 1859, setting loose all the revolutionary elements in Italy and encouraging everywhere the powers of evil, she foresaw the miseries she did not live to see. The Treaty of Villafranca, which gave Italy to the King of Sardinia, from the Ticino to the Mincio, became the signal of persecution at Milan, and the Sacred Heart was of course attacked. It stood courageously its ground for a year, when in March, 1860, the Piedmontese Parliament voted the annexation of the provinces of the Romagna to the Kingdom of Sardinia, an event which was celebrated by public rejoicings. The Sacred Heart refused to illuminate in honour of this iniquitous spoliation of the Pope's dominions. An insurrection ensued, and on the 16th of March the convent was attacked by a mob, which for three hours behaved outrageously, without any interference on the part of the civil or military authorities.

Ten days afterwards, the same attacks were renewed with more violence and brutality than ever. The mob broke in, vociferating threats of every sort. It was no longer possible to hold out; the children were sent to their parents; and on the 13th of May Madame de Limminghe, the Superior, took her final departure.

The Sacred Heart, which had been driven once before out of Parma, in 1848, had been re-established there by the pious widow of Charles III., the sister of the Comte de Chambord. When the revolutionists compelled her to retire into Switzerland, the nuns still remained at their post, following the instructions of the Mother General,

who wrote to the Superior: "I think that as long as you are not expelled, you must remain where Providence has called you, and do all the little good you can by looking after the poor. Open your free-school for poor children, and teach them to work. Life is so short; we must make the most of it, according to those words of our Divine Lord: 'Work whilst it is day, for the night cometh when no man can work.' Be equally devoted to the poor and to the rich. Pray that a spirit of conciliation may prevail, and that peace may be restored. You know that we must be everywhere and towards every one angels of peace, taking no part in politics, and ready to assist everybody as far as our means allow of it."

A poor-school was opened, and seventy children were attending it, when the Government insisted on subjecting it to inspection. This the Mother General would not submit to, and the house was suppressed.

The one at Padua seemed in danger of the same fate, but it weathered the storm. The Sisters received under their roof the wounded soldiers, and nursed them with devoted care, leaving the future in God's hands. Mother Barat hoped it would be so. "Your house," she had written to them, "will be like the reed blown about by the winds, which bows before the hurricane, but maintains its position." This actually happened. The convent was saved.

At that time, Madame Barat's thoughts and her heart were at Rome, where the Vicar of Christ was advancing step by step on the way of the Cross. She would fain have visited again that city of martyrs, and felt, she said, as if another pilgrimage would have effected her conversion. Above all, she wished to be blessed by that hand, for which chains were being prepared. "Amongst all the saints who are to be found in Rome," she said, "the one I admire most is the Holy Father. He is certainly the most

perfect image of Him Whom he represents in this land of exile. What costs me most in giving up the idea of a journey to Rome, is the thought of never seeing again our Supreme Pastor. I should so much have wished to receive one more blessing from that venerated Pontiff before going to our Lord. I feel it would have given me more courage in appearing before the Sovereign Judge. We must pray much for the Pope and the Universal Church, for there is not a single corner of the world where peace really exists. Well, we must look to Heaven, where it will abide for ever! But does it not incline one to say with the Prophet, 'How long is my exile!' Men are full of evil designs, and are watching for the opportunity of moving heaven and earth. We must pray to Him, Who can say to the stormy ocean, 'Thou shalt come as far as this grain of sand and no further.'" She begged the Holy Father to bless a crucifix and rosary for her, on which she might pray for his intentions. "It will," she said, "encourage and strengthen me in my trials, light indeed, when compared to his, but often hard for my weak virtue."

An evil day was indeed approaching. At the end of the summer of 1860, after a series of dark intrigues, tending to isolate the Holy See, in order more surely to despoil it; all at once, without any previous declaration of war, without any of the formalities which are the bulwarks of good faith in the civilized world, and as if the ages of barbarism had returned, masses of troops invaded the Pontifical provinces, and crushed by the brutal force of numbers a handful of heroes. In the words of the Scripture, *Datum est Bestiæ bellum facere cum sanctis et vincere eos.*

The battlefield of Castelfidardo is opposite Loreto. From the heights of Monte Reale the Sacred Heart watched the course of events during the whole of that sad and glorious day. The walls of the convent became indeed the last refuge of the brave Pontifical soldiers, who, fighting

one against ten, drew up their cannons and their cavalry under its windows, determined to resist unto death. It was only then that the nuns and children withdrew and took refuge at Sant' Elpidio. When a few days afterwards they returned to Loreto, the town was in the hands of the enemy; and the first thing the victors insisted upon was the expulsion of the Jesuits and the Nuns of the Sacred Heart. The noble exertions of the Bishop, Mgr. Magnani, in their behalf did not succeed, and on the 27th of September they received orders to leave their house before the 3rd of October.

Sant' Elpidio hoped to be spared, on account of its happy obscurity, which had made the Mother General say that it was a particularly favourite house of hers, from the likeness she saw in it to the scene of our Lord's Nativity. The little community, protected as it was by the gratitude of the townspeople, made a short struggle to remain, but it only served to delay their departure; and on the 2nd of December, 1860, Mother Gerardi and her nuns were obliged to withdraw to Rome.

By dint of patience, the house at Perugia, then in the hands of the same masters, prolonged its stay for two years: but was at last compelled to yield to necessity.

In 1862 the Sacred Heart was replaced there by secular schoolmistresses. Pius IX. received the banished nuns like faithful soldiers who had only capitulated at the last hour. He greeted them with the words of Scripture: "Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice' sake," and then added, "We live in an era of pride. What we want, what we require, is humility, a deep humility, and then resignation, patience, and prayer. This is the hour of darkness, but the Lord will come to our help. One thing I can tell you; in 1849 I did not feel as calm as I do now; I was undecided then as to the course to follow, and on that account I went away. Now I am satisfied; I

know what I must do, and if they come to Rome I know what I shall do."

The revolutionary torrent had swept away since 1847 ten houses of the Society, without including Montet. The political horizon was growing darker and darker; but in the midst of that darkness, as Pius IX. called it, the light of Divine promises was shining brightly.

Whilst brave and generous men gave their lives on the battle-field for the cause of the Church, many a holy woman offered up hers on a bed of suffering; but such suffering that the happiness of this world is as nothing compared to its joys. Amongst these devoted souls were some of Mother Barat's first companions. Mother Toussenel expired after half a century of religious life, exclaiming, "O my God! how I *love*, and how I *thank* you!"

Madame Emma de Bouchaud, during her lingering illness, was always expressing gratitude for the Divine gift of her *good sufferings*. The last words of Mother de Salis at Algiers were: "Thy will be done, O Lord! but let Thy kingdom come to the poor Arabs." Mother de Villefranche said just before she died, "I used to think the day of our first Communion was the happiest in our life, but that was a mistake. The day of Extreme Unction is happier still."

These are but instances of the spirit with which Mother Barat's daughters left this world. Each death amongst her children gave her cause to mourn and to rejoice.

Three months later the war in America broke out. Mother Barat trembled for the fate of her houses in that country. The constant absence of certain news during the next three years increased her anxiety. She knew that the convents of St. Michael's, Natchitoches, and Grand Coteau were in the central seat of the war, or at least on the way to it. But thanks to the sympathy with which the Sacred Heart was looked upon in those States, their houses were

respected and even reverenced by the conflicting parties and their troops.

The time fixed by the Constitutions for the convocation of the Council General had now arrived. The war, and the state of exhaustion of the Venerable Mother General, occasioned some delay in the meeting of this the eighth General Assembly of the Society. The circular letters sent out to convene it mentioned the subjects which were to occupy its attention. Amongst others the appointment of those who were to replace the deceased members of the Council. It ended with these words: "Then all I shall have to do will be to utter the words of the holy and aged Simeon, for leaving the trust which Jesus has vouchsafed to commit to me in the care of souls so anxious to preserve it, I can look upon my mission as ended, and hope that my faults may be remedied by others, and our good Master glorified."

And in her private letters she said: "My last illness has aged me very much. I am drawing near to my end. It is, indeed, time to allow me to rest a little. Pray for that intention."

It seemed, however, as if the Superior General's strength was renewed when the time of this great meeting arrived. On the 22nd of May she said to her daughters: "My legs and my voice fail me, and my sight is growing dim; the poor framework of my body is falling to pieces; but what would this signify if my soul, collecting all its strength, could get more vigorous in proportion as the body decays?" And with an expressive gesture she laid her hand on her heart and raised her eyes to Heaven.

On the feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus she renewed her vows with the community for the last time, and said: "We are gaining ground; the end is approaching. Let us quicken our pace. When the sun is declining it brightens with its rays a greater number of countries than at noon.

And so ought we in the decline of life to win more souls for Jesus. Crosses have not been wanting to us; others are perhaps in store for our little Society, but never let us lose heart; God will sustain us."

The Eighth General Council of the Sacred Heart opened on the 17th of June, 1864. Mother Barat presided at all its sittings and animated it with her spirit, but with humble reserve left as much as possible the Council to act, as if to accustom the Society to do without her. She thought the moment had arrived to press earnestly on the Council her own resignation, and sent a verbal message to the Mothers, urging her desire to be released from the burthen of government. They all pronounced a decided *No.*

Mother Barat then came to them and pleaded in person that her weakness and advanced age made it impossible for her to bear alone the weight of government. In case the Council persisted in its refusal, she wished at any rate to avail herself of the power conceded by the last decree obtained at Rome by naming a Vicar General who could assist or act for her. This sort of compromise was gladly accepted, as it left the Mother Foundress to the last at the head of the Congregation, and provided her with a co-operator chosen by herself, trained and initiated in her system of government and evidently called to succeed her.

Mother Gœtz was named Vicar General. It is reported that the Foundress had received more than one supernatural intimation with regard to this appointment. In 1825, she had said one day at recreation: "My dear children, I was strangely taken aback last night; I was asking God in my prayers to deliver me from the burthen of Superiority which I had had to carry for twenty years, and the answer I received was that I was to be patient, for that my successor was not yet eight years of age. But this was, of course, nothing but a dream," she hastened to

add. But it did so happen that Joséphine Gœtz was at that very time seven years and a half old. In 1842, a holy religious had said to the Foundress: "The Sister who will succeed you is quietly working away in her school." Mother Gœtz was then sub-mistress general at Besançon. Later on, the thoughts and the hopes of the Society began to fix themselves on the Superior of Conflans. The Foundress said of her: "Mother Gœtz's soul is anchored in humility; and then there is so much breadth about her." Humility and breadth were indeed the qualities which the Holy Spirit had implanted in the chosen soul to whom it was given to continue Mother Barat's work.

The Society then numbered three thousand five hundred subjects in the Old and the New World. A hundred and eleven houses had been established under the direction of the Mother General during the sixty-two years that she had been at the head of her Institute, and eighty-six of them were still existing and prospering in 1864. To these were added during the following year those of the Conception in Chili, of Bois l'Evêque at Liege, and then one at Seville, the foundation of which was the last object of Mother Barat's solicitude. The Council lasted a month, during which time the whole Constitution of the Society was completed. What Mother Barat had not done, but still wished to do, was stated and described in documents, which have left to her successors the simple task of carrying out her intentions. It is an almost unexampled occurrence, and may be looked upon as a special mercy, that the foundress of an order should have been thus enabled to put the finishing stroke to her work.

On the 21st of July, 1864, the Council was brought to a close. The following day, St. Mary Magdalen's feast, was a memorable one for the mother-house. The children of the school made a present to Madame Barat of fifteen pastoral staffs, which were intended to represent the fifteen

vicariates or provinces of the Society. She gave them to the Superior Vicars, and those who were present on that occasion never lost the remembrance of that day. It was a very impressive meeting, for all who witnessed it felt that it would never be renewed on earth.

The poor were not forgotten on that festival, and nothing could have given Mother Barat greater joy than an act of charity which she performed that day. A young woman belonging to a good family, who had been for ten years a pupil of the school in Paris, had lost her fortune, and by the illness of her husband, which deprived him of his situation on the railway, the young couple found themselves reduced to a state of destitution. The poor wife pawned her trinkets, her furniture, and even her clothes. At last she had nothing left of the slightest value except her medal of the Congregation of the Children of Mary, which she had thought never to have parted with. But one day that she had no means of buying some medicine the doctor had ordered for her husband, the sacrifice was made, and the beloved medal pawned like her other possessions. Soon afterwards the time for paying their rent arrived, and expulsion was threatened. The husband was recovering, but remained still very weak; his physical and moral sufferings had made him irritable; he was not a religious man, and in his blindness he laid the blame of his misfortunes on Providence. One day that his wife had said to him: "If my good Mother Barat knew our distress, I am sure she would help us," he answered bitterly: "Your good Mother Barat is much too great a lady to take notice of you in your present position; all you would get, my dear, would be additional humiliation, and we have had enough of that already." The poor young woman said nothing, but her tears flowed; her heart felt wounded by this accusation against her dear Mother of former days, and she determined to write to

her in secret. Mother Barat had received that letter a few weeks before her feast. She ran to her drawer, counted out the money due for the rent, and prepared a large present of clothes for her former pupil. In spite of her feebleness, she went about the house searching for all that could be made available for the purpose, and saying to the Sisters: "Poor Clothilde! what terrible distress she is in; give her this and that. Bring me all the contents of that wardrobe, that I may choose a gown for her. Two gowns she must have,—one for week days and one for Sundays; then a shawl and a bonnet and stockings and handkerchiefs. How she has suffered! and to think that one of our own children should be so destitute. Take all this to her as quickly as you can, and tell her to pray for me and the Society." It was a blessed moment for the young wife when she received all these presents from the Sacred Heart and its dear Mother General. Her husband owned with emotion that he had misjudged Madame Barat, and said to his wife: "I will kneel down and pray with you, I never could do so before when you asked me; but at this moment I feel that I must thank God." They prayed together for blessings on their benefactress.

Mother Barat's joy when she heard this can be easily imagined. She continued to assist these young persons in the kindest and most considerate manner, and gained a great influence over the husband. He read the books she lent him, went to Mass with his wife, and by her charity was gradually brought back to the faith and practice of his religion. On the day of the feast of St. Mary Magdalen, the Mother General sent Clothilde a pretty bonnet and the sum necessary for the recovery of all the things she had been obliged to pawn. The husband and wife had been together to Mass that morning; she had offered up her Communion for her benefactress, and he had earnestly prayed for her. In the evening Clothilde came to see

her good Mother. The sight of the joy of her poor child completed the happiness of Mother Barat's feast.

On the morrow of the festival the Councillors departed. It was a sad separation, for many of them could not but feel that they could not expect ever to see again their beloved Superior. But her work was done and theirs clearly assigned to them. That was enough to support them on their onward and upward way.

CHAPTER XIV.

Consummation of Mother Barat's sanctity.

Mother Barat's detachment from all earthly things went on ever increasing to the end of her life. It was with her both a principle and a habit, and extended to every detail of existence. "A wise man needs but little," she used to say, "and a saint still less." Everything about her bore the stamp of religious poverty. Her little sitting-room was so poorly furnished, that a Princess on entering it exclaimed, "What! is this the apartment of a Superior General?" Its furniture consisted of a small table and desk and a few straw chairs, and had no other ornament than a very simple crucifix and a small image of our Blessed Lady. A priest having bequeathed to her a cross elaborately carved, she wrote: "I give it to the house at Beauvais, as a remembrance of this good priest: do not bring it to me, for I should not know where to put it. I like to have in my room only a very simple crucifix." Anything comfortable or costly or handsome, which the affection of her daughters sometimes led them to offer to her, she always rejected and disapproved. To a Sister who had worked for her a travelling-bag in tapestry she said: "I know the kind feelings which have prompted you, but I love you too much in the Lord not to tell you how vexed I am when I think of the time you have spent on this bag. Let it be the first and the last piece of fancy work presented to me. I will not accept any presents." On another occasion

she rejected a coverlet made of silk, and said: "A bit of print cut out of one of the old gowns of the postulants would have done very well. Take this thing away. It would be against poverty to keep it." When she was entreated to accept gifts which seemed to her too costly, she, in return, begged of her daughters not to pain her by insisting upon her giving a bad example. Once, on arriving at one of her houses, she saw a carpet in the room prepared for the Mother General. Nothing could induce her to set her foot in it until this unhappy carpet was removed. Another time, without saying a word, she turned out of the room at Conflans, not only the carpet, but the curtains and other contrivances placed there to keep out the cold. Then sending for the procuratrix, she smiled, and requested her to take away all those useless things which encumbered the passage.

She would have liked to wear none but old and patched garments, and ordered the Religious at the head of the wardrobe never to give her anything new. The things required for her daily use and her correspondence were asked for as alms by the Mother General. "My children, we are poor, and must do like poor people," she always said. Everything belonging to the Community she economized with the strictest care; water, wood, and oil, for instance. The ends of candles she desired to be set aside for her room, and kept up as little fire there as possible. In the garden and in the refectory she was often seen collecting everything that could be turned in any way to account, and was often found sweeping, cleaning, weeding, like the humblest of servants, and that with a bright and cheerful activity which showed she was working for God. Never for a moment did she remain idle; her hands were constantly employed in sewing, mending, and knitting. If one of the nuns stopped working whilst she related something at recreation, the Mother General would notice it

and say: "My child, you can tell us that and work at the same time. Poor people like us must do two things at once." Overwhelmed as she was with business and writing, there was not much time to spare for work, and she was wont to accuse herself in the last period of her life of not being able to make more than three or four pairs of stockings a year. "So you see, my children," she added, "that I live at the expense of the Society." No one would have practised greater austerities than Mother Barat, if obedience had not checked that ardour for penance which had originally inspired her with a strong desire to be a Carmelite. She was about one day to imitate St. Jane Frances of Chantel, by impressing on her breast the image of the Sacred Heart by means of a brass medal she had heated in the fire, but her purpose was discovered in time to stop the act. Her habitual practice was to conceal her penances. She said, "that to hide what we suffer was pleasing to our Lord."

Pride was the enemy against which this great servant of God fought most incessantly. "Oh, I should like to strangle that foe!" she often exclaimed. "There ought to be no truce to that war. We must conquer or perish." A holy Bishop, in the last years of her life, declared that Mother Barat's humility was a revelation. In her case, self seemed merged, as it were, in the ocean of God's greatness. "Self! that little atom!" she contemptuously called it. And speaking of temptations to vain glory, she said: "I am not afraid of them—they are simply to be spurned," adding to the words an expressive gesture with her foot.

We have often mentioned how she disliked the title of Foundress. It made her smile with pity, and exclaim, as she looked up to Heaven: "O Jesus! Thou, Thou only art the Founder!" Her humility had a ready answer on all occasions. If people asked why God had chosen her to lay the foundations of the Society, she thus

accounted for it: "Are you not aware that the most beautiful flowers spring from a rank soil, and that the most worthless and unsightly stones are thrown into the foundations of a house, for the very purpose of remaining out of sight?" If they inquired how she had managed to accomplish so many great works, she explained it by saying: "Just like a child whose hand is held and guided by the master whilst it writes in its copy-book. Without that help a fine scrawl would indeed be produced." How could she direct so many souls, so many communities scattered all over the world? "Like those finger-posts on the roadside which point out the right way, but never move themselves." And how did she manage to write those wonderful spiritual instructions with which her letters were filled? "Even as it happens to forgers who stamp on false bank notes the evidence which condemns them." And these clever and quick answers were uttered with a strength of conviction which left no doubt as to their sincerity. In the month of September, 1864, on her return from Conflans, where she had been celebrating the feast of the Seven Dolours, Mother Barat said: "To-day the Beatification of Blessed Margaret Mary is celebrated at Rome. This is indeed the triumph of humility. Oh, why do you not thoroughly devote yourselves to the practice of this great virtue? Alas! I am afraid that the fable of Mother Lobster and her daughter accounts for it:

* Mère Ecrivisse un jour a sa fille disait
Comme tu vas, grand Dieu? ne peux tu marcher droit?
Et comme vous allez vous-même! dit sa fille?
Puis-je autrement que ne fait ma famille?

* Mother Lobster one day
To her daughter did say,
Good heavens! what a gait!
My child, can't you walk straight?
O mother, how you talk!
Yourself, how do you walk?
I cannot mend my gait;
We none of us walk straight.

You might well say that to me. . . . Well, become all of you Margaret Marys, and perhaps you will drag me on with you." Compliments were her aversion. If at Conflans they began singing stanzas in her praise, she interrupted them by such exclamations as these: "My dear children, you will give me a horror of poetry;" or, "By dint of singing, my poor children, you have lost your wits;" or, "This sort of music does not suit me at all, for it has already kept me silent for ten minutes, and I want to talk to you." If she was mentioned in the annual letters, the sound of her bell soon interrupted the reader. "If you please, my child, skip that passage," she said, "and everything of the sort you may happen to come upon. I did not know that people took the trouble to write down my words." One day that Dr. Hughes, Archbishop of New York, was ascribing to her the merit of the great things done in America by the Sacred Heart, Mother Barat could not conceal her vexation. The Archbishop, perceiving it, changed the subject, and on leaving her remarked: "It does not do to praise your Mother General." Her secretary entering the room soon afterwards, found Madame Barat shedding tears. She said to a great-niece of Father Varin's who was making her probation in 1865: "It was a signal mistake of your uncle's to appoint me to the government of the Society. . . . Still, it is just possible that God inspired him to do so. He may have wished to found His work on the most utter nothingness. If your Mother is so poor a concern, what must you be my child?"

The ardent fire of love which burnt in Mother Barat's heart often found vent in sudden exclamations, which darted from it like flames. This was especially the case in latter years, when she had not strength to speak much.

There was nothing she did not make use of to raise her soul to God, and St. Bonaventure's words about St. Francis of Assisi might well have been applied to her.

"He saw in all beauty Him Who is beauty itself, and tracked as it were on the surface of creation the beloved of his soul. Everything was to him a step of the ladder by which he ascended to the supreme perfection, and he looked upon each creature as a drop of the Divine goodness."

Once, as she was gazing on some beautiful mountains, Mother Barat exclaimed: "Oh, what beautiful things God makes, and what ugly things we do." One day she stopped in the garden to look at a lovely rose sparkling with dew, and then said, as if speaking to it: "Beautiful as thou art, thou art not my God!" This reminds us of St. Mary Magdalen of Pazzi's words when she enjoyed the perfume of a flower: "Oh, how good Thou art my God to have intended from all eternity to create this rose for the delight of a poor sinner like me." As she travelled, Mother Barat was continually exciting her companions to praise the great Creator of the world. Nature and art and books inspired her with comparisons and illustrations tending to God's glory. Everything with her tended to *Sursum corda.*

We can gather from this what must have been her spirit of prayer. She said once to a Superior: "If we manage well, we can make more time than would seem possible. With all I have to do, I still contrive to spend six or seven hours in prayer." The following day, afraid of having given too favourable an idea of her devotion, she tried to explain away what she had said: "As I sleep little, some of the hours of the night are, of course, employed in thinking of our Lord; then in the afternoon I pray in my little tribune, but this is in fact rest rather than prayer."

Her habit of union with our Lord had become an instinctive and irresistible condition of her soul. Once after giving the signal for the end of the reading at dinner-time, she fell into so deep a state of recollection that for an hour she neither spoke nor moved. No one ventured to interrupt

her, and the bell which called the nuns to Vespers did not arouse the Mother General from her abstraction. Often in her travels, while the horses rested, she used to stroll into a wood, and when the hour arrived to set out again her companions found her kneeling by a bush entirely absorbed in God. Not but that she experienced at times what she called "the hiding of our Lord's face" and suffered from spiritual dryness. This trial she turned to account by making it a subject of humiliation, as we see in a note in her handwriting, dated 1839: "I earnestly beg of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, through our Lady's Seven Dolours, to give me back the method of prayer I used to have in former days and which I have lost through my long infidelities."

We have not many details with regard to Mother Barat's method of prayer. It was generally speaking more affective than speculative. It did not deal in profound thoughts and still less aimed at extraordinary states. She said of St. Gertrude: "It is her love of God, not her revelations, I envy." The mysteries of the life of Jesus were the constant subjects of her meditations, and she identified herself with the periodical celebration the Church makes of its events. His life became her life.

In Advent her recollection always deepened. On the feast of Christmas joy filled her heart. She received that day and kept in her room until the feast of the Purification a little image of our Infant Lord, which she was wont to cover with kisses and to hold on her knees during her prayers, pressing it to her heart and calling it her treasure. On Good Friday, she spent the hours during which our Lord hung upon the Cross in such intense consideration of His sufferings that she could not be aroused from her meditations. Towards four o'clock her soul and body seemed to revive. On one of those sacred days she came in the evening into the noviceship, and exclaimed with a sigh of

relief, "At last, my dear children, His sufferings are over! It feels like coming to life again." On Easter Sunday her face brightened with joy—she looked transfigured. It was the same with all the glorious mysteries. A Lay-sister remembers how on the feast of the Ascension one year, when the Venerable Mother was walking up the stairs leaning on her arm, she turned to her with a sweet smile, and said, "O Sister, if you were but leading me up to Heaven!"

As to the tabernacle, it was Mother Barat's refuge and home, her heaven upon earth. In the morning, before five o'clock, when the Sister sacristan went to open the door of the church she generally found the Mother General in prayer before it, longing for the moment of entrance into her Lord's presence. For two or three hours she usually remained before the altar in humble adoration. Sometimes in the course of the day she was seized with a sudden thirst for the Divine presence. "It is so long since I have seen our Lord," she would exclaim, and her countenance expressed even more than her words. Many of her nuns say that they have seen her walk up to the altar with clasped hands and looking at the tabernacle with an ardent gaze whilst praying for some special grace, "Do not, do not refuse it," she would plead, "I have prayed for it so long."

Mother Barat communicated every day, and prepared for it by confession. In her later years she confessed only every other day, which made her say: "I hope I am beginning to be converted, and then I shall not be obliged to confess oftener than once a week, as you all do." She accused herself of the least fault with so much contrition that it might have been supposed she had committed the greatest sins. One of the nuns declares that when she went after her into the confessional she often saw it wetted with her tears.

After Holy Communion it was useless to call or to touch her. She looked up with her eyes open, but saw nothing. At last, as if coming back from a long distance, she roused herself and said: "Oh, is that you? Yes, we must leave Him, and go and work for Him. We must leave God for God." Some have thought that at those times they saw her surrounded by a bright light.

The friends and patrons most frequently invoked by Mother Barat were the angels, especially St. Michael the protector of her Society; the Apostles St. Peter, St. Paul, and St. John, St. Ignatius of Loyola, St. Francis Xavier, St. Mary Magdalen, St. Theresa, and Blessed Margaret Mary, the apostle of the Sacred Heart. She said of this last Saint: "Humiliation and love made up her whole life. Would we could say the same of ourselves!"

We have seen how strong and deep were her feelings of filial love and devotion to the Vicar of Christ, her reverence for the episcopal office was evinced on all occasions, and to the humblest priest she always showed the utmost respect. There was at the convent of Orleans a good old priest, M. Stérenne, who had been for years curé in a village, a pious, humble, simple-minded man. One day Mother Barat, who knew how holy he was, went into the sacristy, and kneeling before him craved his blessing. "But it is impossible," the old priest said; "what does this mean? What! a saint ask a blessing from such a sinner as myself? It is I who want your blessing," and down on his knees he went. As neither would yield in this devout contest, they were at last obliged to pray together, and to ask our Lord to bless them both.

The spouses of Christ, to whatever Order they belonged, were dear to the servant of God. The Carmelites, the Sisters of St. Vincent of Paul, the Little Sisters of the Poor, and the Nuns of the Visitation, were to her really like sisters. In 1847 she signed, with the convent at Paray

le Monial, a treaty of association for prayer and good works. Never did she feel the least jealousy at the successes of other religious Orders. "Let us do all we can," she wrote; "let us deserve God's blessing on our labours, and always rejoice at the prosperity of those who work for the same Master." In 1862 the Council of the work of schools for the East begged her to interest herself about the missionary community in Syria called the Sisters of the Sacred Heart. The Mother General recommended this work to all her houses in Europe, and even in America, and sixty-five Arabian Sisters were supported by her efforts. "It would have been a great joy to me," she said, "to have sent myself a colony to the Holy Land. These good Sisters in Jesus Christ will do still better."

Her thirst for the salvation of souls seemed to increase as her end approached. "The night is close at hand," she said in one of her letters to Mother DeBrou, "the night when we can no longer work, or merit, or save souls. This is what I should most regret, supposing we could regret anything, when the Master comes and calls for us." And another time: "To be an apostle, a saviour of souls, is the only thing worth living for." She wrote to one of her American missionaries, Mother Evelina Lévêque: "They tell me to leave off writing when my pen shakes, but how can I leave off when I am writing on this subject—the foreign missions, my first attraction?" Sometimes she felt an ardent desire to visit her distant communities, especially the poorest amongst them—the Irish houses above all. "I should start at once," she said, "if I were worth the expense of the journey." Her love for the souls of sinners who could describe? She had always in hand some conversion for which she toiled. For a long time those of the Emperor Nicholas and the Abbé de Lamennais occupied her. She had agreed with our Lord that every time she kissed the little crucifix at her side it meant, "By the

infinite merits of Thy Passion, Lord Jesus, convert Thy poor servants Nicholas and Lamennais." The impenitent death of the latter drew from her the exclamation: "O my children, if I had any influence with the Heart of our Lord, would that poor man have died in that way?"

Reigning sovereigns, emperors, kings, ministers, influential officers of State, had a great share in her prayers. Unwearied was her zeal in beseeching for them the aid of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. On all occasions she performed the part of an apostle, and never received a visit without striving to do some good to the soul God placed in her way. She obtained in this manner many a promise, the fulfilment of which brought people back to the performance of religious duties. The doctor who attended her in her last years, good man as he was in other ways, had neglected his religion. Often and often she had tried to bring him back to God, and a short time before her death had a long conversation with him on the subject. When he left her he was so deeply moved that he could scarcely speak: "What a woman that is," was all he said. Soon afterwards it was known that he had gone to Communion.

The Venerable Mother's letters often effected conversions. One of her nephews, who had spent fifteen years in the direction of the military hospitals in Africa, was named director of the one at Ajaccio. He was very ill when he arrived there, and soon fell into so rapid a consumption that his state was declared hopeless. He had become an infidel, laughed at holy things, and complained impatiently of the efforts made by the chaplain of his regiment to bring him back to the faith of his childhood. Fortunately the priest spoke to him one day of Madame Barat. He had known his aunt very little, but held her in great veneration. "She is a saint," he said, and after relating some instances of her holiness, he pointed to a crucifix hanging on the wall, and told the chaplain that Pius IX. had given it to

her, and that she had sent it to him when he was in Africa. The priest, Canonico Spinosi, wrote at once to Mother Barat to inform her of the state of her nephew, and to beg her immediately to write to him, which she did. He expressed regret that he did not keep a copy of this letter; it was, he says, a masterpiece of affectionate zeal and prudent advice and persuasion. Every word of it was exactly adapted to the character and the feelings of the invalid, and breathed a spirit of Apostolic fervour. The heart of the soldier was deeply touched by a language so new to him, and over and over again he read this precious and encouraging letter, and called upon the priest to listen to it and to admire it.

After an evening spent in thought and struggle with himself, the sick man made up his mind, and as soon as the chaplain entered his room on the following morning he said: "Monsieur l'Aumonier, I wish to go to confession." Mgr. Sarrebayrouze, the auxiliary Bishop, celebrated Mass in his room. When he returned to him and asked him if he wished to receive the sacraments of the Church, the dying man answered: "Yes, Monseigneur, I wish for it and look forward to it with joy, though I am unworthy of that grace." He received first the Sacrament of Confirmation and then that of Extreme Unction with a piety which deeply affected those who were present, and died full of gratitude to her who had opened for him the way to light, and led him to seek God's mercy. "Oh, what a blessing it is, my children," Mother Barat said, "when God sends us souls to save! If I could only know that I had saved one soul!"

The Holy Souls in Purgatory she was always longing to aid. The foundress of an order devoted to that work owed a great deal to Madame Barat. On the 27th of January, 1856, the Mother General said to the probanists: "I have seen this week a person whom our Lord has

inspired to found a Society entirely devoted to the souls in Purgatory. Oh, my dear children, that is a soul burning with zeal! She tells me that she has already a great many postulants, and asked me how she should train them to the religious life. I directed her to a priest worthy of her confidence, and who has been of great use to her." This holy person was Mdlle. Eugénie Smet, who had been educated at the Sacred Heart at Lille, and who, under the name of Mother Marie de la Providence, was the first Superior of the Helpers of the Holy Souls, devoted to the sick poor and the relief of the suffering portion of the Church. Mother Barat became her most frequent adviser, and assisted with the most earnest good will the infant Society, the motto of which, "To pray, to act, and to suffer for the souls in Purgatory," was so exactly in keeping with the spirit of charity of the servant of God.

Love and respect for poverty were one of the great characteristics of the saintly soul we are describing. She obeyed much more readily the summons of poor visitors than those of eminent and titled persons. It happened one day that she had sent an excuse when a distinguished visitor had asked for her whilst she was in prayer in the chapel, but a moment afterwards a coalheaver's little girl having begged to see the Mother General, she at once came to the parlour and catechized the child as if she had nothing else in the world to do. Another time excessive fatigue had made her refuse to admit a pious Roman Princess, but recollecting that she had promised a visit to the poor washerwomen employed in the house, she went off in spite of her exhaustion, and spent some time conversing with them. "Ah, Reverend Mother," one of her daughters once exclaimed, "it answers with you to be poor and insignificant." She was like a mother to the servants, workmen, and tradespeople employed in her houses. At Nantes she saw one day an old workman who was hiding behind the

trees and dining on dry bread while his companions were eating a comfortable meal. Mother Barat called the portress, and asked her to take to the poor man a parcel; in it was a loaf which contained, as was afterwards found out, her own dinner, which had just been taken up to her. No one realized more than did this holy woman the supernatural beauty of poverty. She had an instinctive attraction towards it. As soon as notice was given her that people wanted her assistance, her answer always was, "What do they want?" and very often she gave more than had been asked for. The procuratrix had sometimes to express fears that she would be ruined by such unlimited almsgiving. "Well, when we have nothing left," the Mother General answered, "we can sell our sacred vessels rather than leave the poor unassisted." The Sister at the head of the linen-room complained that she gave away her best chemises, that they were too good. "Too good!" she exclaimed, "too good for the poor! why, my child, I would give them my skin if I could!" One of the portresses once asked her what she would do if she was besieged like herself with beggars. "What I should do, my child? Oh, I suppose I should ruin the Society. God knew it, and that is why He did not allow me to be a portress."

Her charities were so incessant, that she forgot what she had given. One winter evening, seeing at the door a ragged old man, shivering with cold, "Give him my cloak," she said. "Why, Reverend Mother," the portress exclaimed, "do you not remember that you gave it away this morning?" The Sister who looked after her clothes found one day her cupboard entirely empty. "Well, I suppose you are satisfied now, Reverend Mother," she said; "you have not even a change of linen left. The people to whom you give your things are not so poor as you are. Is this proper for a Superior General?" Mother Barat smiled and answered: "Forgive me, my good Sister, the Superior

General will easily find somebody who will be charitable enough to give her what she wants. My poor people would find it more difficult."

Perseverance in relieving misery was also one of her merits. A young orphan had been assisted at the Sacred Heart, clothed, and sent back to her family in the country. She came to Paris, and was again relieved and clothed by Mother Barat. After the lapse of six months the portress saw the same girl again at the door in rags, and at first refused to let her in. "Do go and tell the Mother General that I am here," she pleaded; "I am sure she will take pity upon me." The Sister went to Madame Barat, but told her that it was a very unsatisfactory case, and that this was the third time the girl had come to the house in the same condition. "And you, Sister," the Mother General quietly said, "have you had recourse only three times to our Lord's mercy?" A suit of clothes was immediately got together. "Now, we only want shoes and stockings," Madame Barat said; "I will give my shoes, and you will give your stockings. Make haste, that we may not be seen by the Sisters when they come out of the refectory." The trousseau thus completed was bestowed on the girl, with a little money to support her until she could obtain a situation. The faults and even the vices of the poor did not harden towards them the heart of the Mother General. An infirm old woman, who could not bear to go to the hospital, had been for a long time lodged and fed at her expense. Once when her poor pensioner had been for some days absent she sent for her, made her sit down by her side, and dirty and sickly as she was, kindly embraced her. The Sisters found out that the poor creature was given to drink. At first Mother Barat would not believe it; but when ample proofs were given, she desired her not to come to the house, but continued to assist her through other persons. Every day almost she would inquire, "Has

anything been heard of my poor woman? If she comes back and seems humbly disposed, mind you receive her." She did come at the end of a fortnight's time, and made many promises which were soon forgotten; but at the least token of repentance Madame Barat's hand and heart were opened to her again.

It must be admitted that her charity was frequently deceived. Her doctor, whom she asked to visit her poor people, had often occasion to tell her that a bad use was made of her gifts. "Oh, really?" she would say. "Well, then, promise me that you will call again to try to improve them."

It was not the necessaries of life alone that she loved to give to those for whom she felt a supernatural affection. She liked to indulge the tastes and even the fancies of the poor. A beggar asked for money to buy snuff, which the Sister whom he applied to considered a preposterous luxury. But Mother Barat said that if he felt the want of it, and that it was a pleasure to him, there was no reason to deny him that boon. Hearing one day that a poor family were expecting their relatives from the country to spend the day with them, she provided them with a good dinner for their guests. She had taken a fancy for one particular postman, because he never called her anything but *Sister Barat.* She charged her daughters not to tell him to do otherwise. "He is quite right," she said, "it is you who do not understand this sort of thing." She converted him, and interested herself in his children. On the day that he made his Easter Communion she gave the good man and all his family a little dinner at the Sacred Heart, and had it been possible would have waited upon them herself.

Her love for children went on increasing to the end of her days. Once when she was staying at the Feuillantines she missed so much the sight and the society of her dear little flock, that she wrote to one of the mistresses: "My

child, I hunger after children; do put all the little ones into a big carriage and bring them to see me for their holiday. I shall have their meal ready for them in the garden." When the new house near the Hotel Biron became her residence, she often assembled them under a cedar which she had planted herself, and told them edifying stories. It was one of her sayings, that she would have founded the Society, had it been only for the sake of saving the soul of one child.

But she was preparing to take leave of her beloved little family. On the 21st of July, 1862, after receiving their congratulations on her feast, she told them that the hope of meeting them in Heaven consoled her in her old age. "I shall soon be waiting for you there," she said. "You mean to go to Heaven, I suppose?" "Oh, yes, we do!" was the answer. "Will you then promise me never to commit a mortal sin?" "Yes, we promise it!" two hundred voices replied. "Well, then we shall be together during all eternity." Those last words were uttered in a loud and earnest voice as in former days. She remained for a few moments with her hands and eyes raised up to Heaven, beseeching God to bless her numerous family.

Even towards animals she evinced that tenderness of heart with which God had so peculiarly gifted her. She used to say that as they have no future existence to expect we ought to make their present lives as happy as possible. Many and many an instance of her kindness to dumb creatures could be added to those already related, such as her taking up in her arms a lamb lost in the field, and carrying it to the sheepfold, and her drawing out of a chalk pit, not without some risk to herself, a sheep which had tumbled into it. In the winter the snow was swept away to make room for the seed with which she fed whole troops of sparrows. The nests of the birds in the garden of the mother-house she tenderly protected, and begged her

daughters not to go near them. Even ants and spiders and flies were cared for in her room, and to those who wondered over it she said: "Let us make all God's creatures happy when we can. That is my principle. Let people think of it as they will." It was generally noticed that all those living creatures she was so kind to cared for her in return. Several facts are related which support this belief. At one place a number of birds surrounded and even entered her carriage, singing as if to take leave of her. A cat at Conflans used always to bring her kittens one after another to the Mother General, and lay them down at her feet as if to put them under her protection. All sorts of anecdotes of this kind are related. Those who witnessed these facts were reminded of the familiar intercourse which existed between the Fathers of the Desert and the humblest of God's creatures.

All His works, trees, fruits, and especially flowers, which she looked upon as the most delicate masterpiece of Divine Providence, were in her opinion to be admired, and in their measure cherished. She was often seen standing before a tree laden with fruit, or a flower-bed, or the grass of the fields, absorbed in contemplation. Sometimes she picked up the flowers which the children had torn up in their gardens, and begged the gardener to replace them in the soil, and let them bloom for a few days longer for the glory of God. One day she saw the Sisters throwing away some nosegays which were hardly withered at all, and she said, "God has made these beautiful things for us, and you do not think it worth while to make them live a little longer?"

It was the belief of many of Mother Barat's daughters that she could read the thoughts of others. They often found when they went to open their hearts to her that she knew all they were going to say. She seems to have once heard from a distance the cry of a soul in distress. A

young woman, on her arrival in Paris, fell very ill at an hotel, and in the anguish of fever and delirium, kept all night calling on Mother Barat, and begging her not to forsake her. The Mother General sent the next day some one to see this poor girl, and to assure her that she would never abandon her. How she discovered her arrival in Paris, her abode, her sufferings, and her prayers, no one could ever tell. One of her nuns relates that one evening she went into Mother Barat's room, and found her sitting at her window, looking very much absorbed and preoccupied. She did not attend to what she was saying, and said to her, "My dear child, if you will do me a kindness, go and ask for Masses to be said for one of our Sisters who has just died in Italy, and is in need of prayers." She gave her to understand that this person had appeared to her and asked her for her assistance. Facts of this nature were frequently noticed, and gave rise to the expectation that she would be one day numbered amongst the saints whom the Church places on her altars.

CHAPTER XVI.

Last days and death of Mother Barat.

1865.

In spite of a natural feebleness of constitution and an habitual state of ill-health, which increased at times so as to bring her to death's door, Mother Barat's life lasted beyond the ordinary limits assigned to earthly existence. During the first half of her days she looked like a person almost too delicate to live long, but after the period of repose, which her accident and its consequent infirmity necessitated, from 1829 to 1832, she became less thin, and looked stronger. There was nothing at first sight remarkable in her appearance; she was short of stature, and in her advanced age somewhat bent, but the charm of her refined and delicate features was indescribably attractive. A high forehead and thoughtful brow, a slightly aquiline nose, and cheek bones and a chin rather prominently marked, gave her face an expression of energy and power tempered by extreme sweetness and kindness. Her mouth was charming, her smile irresistibly captivating. When anything touched or interested her, Mother Barat's head, usually a little bent down, would be thrown back, and her eyes then beamed with expression and feeling. As long as she retained the free use of her limbs her movements were both graceful and rapid, and her way of walking so light and quick that she seemed to move on wings. A bright flush coloured her southern complexion when she talked of

anything that excited her. Nothing could be more speaking than her countenance. But this remarkable vivacity never amounted to impetuosity. Her words were always measured, exact, under control, and to the purpose. Her manner showed that her spirit was under the continual influence of grace, and in constant subjection to the guidance of God. Humility and recollection surrounded her with a halo through which her sanctity shone all the more brightly.

Towards the end of her life infirmities paralyzed her organs. She could barely stand, or speak so as to be heard; she slept scarcely at all, and ate almost nothing. Her life seemed a sort of miracle prolonged by God for His own purposes. Her desires to be united with her Divine Spouse were more ardent than ever. A religious, who was at that time fulfilling the office of portress, states that she found her one day absorbed in God, her hands clasped together, and her eyes fixed on Heaven. "The noise I made in coming in," she says, "did not rouse her. She kept repeating from time to time the name of Jesus, in so supernatural a tone that I felt strongly affected, and then she exclaimed, 'Heaven! Heaven!' I fell on my knees before her little table and gazed on her face, which was transfigured, and beaming with the anticipated joy of Paradise. After a few minutes she bent down her eyes and saw me, 'O Reverend Mother! Reverend Mother!' I said in an agitated voice. She tried to explain away what I had noticed, and pointing to a heap of papers on her table, said with a smile, 'I was thinking as I looked at all this labour, that Heaven will be our reward. It is a relief to bear that in mind. I must now and then give myself a little rest.'"

Mother Barat suffered much from fatigue and exhaustion during the winter of 1864 to 1865, the last she was to spend on earth. She expressed regret at not being able oftener to see her daughters, and added, pointing to Mother Gœtz,

"But I resign myself to my inability all the more readily, as God has now supplied my place." On the 19th of March, feast of St. Joseph, she said: "What gratitude we owe to St. Joseph for the Mother Joséphine he has given us. She has indeed been a gift from Heaven." The Mother General did not appear again till Holy Week. Pope Pius IX. had granted in those days the graces of a great jubilee to the Universal Church, and the community had just concluded its last prescriptions. The state of Mother Barat's health did not allow her to communicate at that moment, and on Holy Wednesday she said to her daughters, "How happy I should have been, my children, to eat of the crumbs of your Communion . . . but I was not worthy of that grace, and I felt as if our Lord might say, as He looked at you and then at me, 'You are clean, but not all,' though indeed I hope not in the same sense."

On Easter Day she was able to go to Holy Communion; her soul was filled with joy, and on the Sunday of the Good Shepherd she appeared again at recreation, but could hardly raise her voice; still when her daughters recited a little poem in which they spoke of her as a faithful shepherd, Mother Barat found strength to scold them a little: "Your poetry," she said, "has touched my heart, for my heart is not dead yet; but I cannot accept such words as addressed to myself. How odd it is, that I who have a little good sense, the sort of good sense everybody has, and you who have a great deal more of it than I have, we cannot at all agree, and yet such good, excellent nuns cannot be supposed to say what is not true! Well, I imagine the only way to account for it is to suppose that all these fine praises are addressed to our Lord, whose unworthy representative I am in your eyes. Be ever faithful to Him, my children, and then we shall only have to thank our true Shepherd that He employed this old sheep to help Him in His work till the day that He calls her into His eternal fold."

In the first days of spring Mother Barat appeared to revive. Health, strength, spirits, and sanctity, all seemed on the increase. Delighted at witnessing this sort of resurrection, Madame Gœtz could not help saying, "Our Mother General will live for ten years to come!" and perhaps secretly hoped that she would precede her in eternity.

But this was not Mother Barat's own feeling; on the contrary, she was calmly and peacefully taking leave of the persons, the places, and the things that were dear to her.

Every day her soul was detaching itself more entirely from earth, and there is not one of the letters she wrote during those last weeks which does not contain a farewell or an allusion to a hoped for meeting in Heaven. On the 23rd of March she wrote to her nephew, the Abbé Dusaussoy: "Do not forget me during the Holy Sacrifice; my end is approaching, and my excessive weakness warns me it is very near. Help me to find mercy with our Lord; my need of it is great." On the 22nd of April she said to Madame de Portes: "As your Mother advances in age she is losing her strength, her eyes, and even her memory, as far as her intellect is concerned; but as to the memory of the heart, it rather increases than diminishes. This means, my dear daughter, that I can never forget you. Shall we meet again? When I say this my eyes turn to Heaven. Pray for your Mother, that she may soon find a refuge in the mercy of the Heart of Jesus. Eighty-five years! If I had worked better, my life would have ended long ago, but I am very near to its utmost limits. Obtain for me that even now I may hasten to make up for the past." On the 29th of April she exclaimed: "Oh, how rapidly years go by! and when the end comes, what a blessing it is to have fought for Jesus Christ, to have loved and imitated our humble and meek Lord. I suppose, my child, you hardly expect to live as long as your old Mother

General. Well, this long life seems like a short dream by the side of eternity. Let us then make haste to fill our remaining days with virtues and merits." On the 15th of May she wrote: "We who have grown old and grey in the service of Jesus and in a perfect vocation, we ought to have attained to the utmost height of virtue. I trust this is the case with you; but your Mother is still far from it." And on the following day: "I am often afraid that I have been an obstacle to a greater outpouring of Divine grace on the Society. I have not time to make up for the past. Help me to redeem it."

On the 9th of May, under the cedar tree in the garden, she received a deputation from the younger portion of the school, gave the little children presents of fruit, and spoke loving, motherly words to them. "Promise me, my little ones," she said to them, "never to offend God, and then we shall meet in Heaven with Jesus and Mary, whom you love, I know." She then gave them her blessing, the last blessing given by this servant of God to children, those life-long objects of her love and care.

On the following day she wrote to Mother Prevost: "It was so pleasant to look at your children yesterday; one could see in their pure and sweet faces that God has taken possession of their hearts. Our labours are amply rewarded when we see the divine results of our teaching in these young souls." And she added gratifying words regarding the state of the community: "Everything goes on prosperously in your dear and numerous family of the Rue de Varennes, and with all the peace, order, and self-devotion which you know belongs to it."

On the 21st of May, the Sunday before the feast of the Ascension, she went into the room of the probanists at the time of recreation. "My dear daughters," she said, "I was bent upon seeing you to-day, for *on Thursday we go to Heaven*, and we must spend a little time together

before that happens." Only a figurative sense was ascribed to those words which were to be so literally fulfilled.

She had never been more kind and gracious in her manner. Some of her daughters were sitting at a distance from her. She told them to come closer, and said: "I want to have you all near me;" and added, that as she had not seen them for some time, she reckoned on their having made great progress, as each successive day ought to be marked by improvement. Then some letters from her little schoolboys at Marmoutier* were read aloud. One of them wrote: "We pray to God that you may still live a long while." She raised her eyes to Heaven with an expressive look. Another said: "Reverend Mother, I pray that I may meet you in Paradise." "Ah! it is there," she exclaimed, "I shall be indeed glad to see them!" And she spoke of the harm done to the poorer classes by knowledge when separated from faith, and exhorted her daughters not merely to instruct children, but to bring them up in the fear of God.

In the garden she spoke to the Lay-sisters who had assembled there to see her. "My children," she said to them, "be very humble, I beseech you, for if that step is wanting in the ladder of virtue, you will not get to Heaven." The two Sisters on whom she was leaning wanted to hurry her away, but she turned back to ask for prayers after her death. To Matthieu, the gardener, she spoke of his flower beds with her usual sweet manner.

On that same day she wrote a letter of eight pages to Mother Mayer, the Superior of Riedenburg. It was the last time she used that pen which had done so much for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. We find in it these beautiful words: "When you were at the head of the school God said to you, as He did to St. Peter, '*Feed My*

* This school for poor little boys had been one of those extra works so often connected with the convents of the Sacred Heart.

lambs,' and when you were made Superior He charged you to *Feed His sheep*." And then the Mother General sent affectionate messages and holy recommendations to the young Princesses, Marguerite and Alix, daughters of the Duchess of Parma, who were educated at Riedenburg.*

That afternoon she assisted at Benediction with the children who were preparing for their first Communion. In the evening, she was again in the chapel during the few minutes of adoration after supper. The probanists saw her kneeling in her stall, and she gave herself the signal for withdrawal, thus realizing her own saying, "That a religious of the Sacred Heart must die sword in hand."

The next day, Monday, the 22nd, was to be an eventful one, but nothing in the morning seemed to forbode what was about to happen. Mother Barat rose as usual at five and began her hour of prayer. Her recollection was so profound that she did not hear the sound of the infirmarian's knock often repeated at her door. That good Sister gave the following account of what then took place: "I opened the door and saw our Mother General on her knees absorbed in prayer and holding her crucifix in her hands. I knelt down near her, but she was so lost in God, that she neither saw nor heard me. I hardly ventured to breathe, but as I was about to go away she turned towards me with her beautiful smile, and asked me what I wanted. I reminded her that she had desired me to let her know in the morning how Madame Gœtz, who was ailing at that time, had passed the night. She made minute inquiries on the subject, and recommended me to take great care of her. I then went away." Madame Barat continued absorbed in prayer during Mass, and remained in the chapel till half-past eight. Nothing announced the impending change. She went

* Princess Marguerite became the wife of Don Carlos of Spain, and during an unhappy war gave striking examples of piety, courage, and devoted charity.

back to her room, and was quietly reading her letters, some of which she sent to her Vicar General, when, just as she was about to sit down to her breakfast, she said to the Sister who waited upon her: "I am not well this morning," and then holding her head with her hands, exclaimed: "Oh, my head! my head!" and seemed ready to faint. Courageous to the end, she objected to go to bed, but was soon obliged to submit to it. Mother Gœtz arrived, and was alarmed at seeing her dear Mother with her eyes shut, her features altered, and appearing very much prostrated. She asked her what she was suffering from. Madame Barat, speaking with difficulty, said that it was from her head. Mother Gœtz spoke of applying a blister, and she answered, "You will do well." Those were the last words she spoke. Once again she tried to speak, but her tongue had lost the power of utterance. Three physicians were sent for, and immediately ascertained that there was congestion of the brain, which nothing could relieve. Speech never returned: the silence of the grave had begun for Madame Barat. Several years before, some of her nuns had been mentioning in the presence of the Mother General the edifying words which a dying Superior had addressed to her community: "And you, Reverend Mother," one of them said, "will you say nothing to your daughters when you leave them?" "Oh, if God grants my wish," Madame Barat replied, "I shall say nothing; no last words of mine shall be recorded." Her humble desire was fulfilled.

At ten o'clock that day her director, Father Gamard, S.J., confessed her by means of signs, gave her absolution, and suggested to her several ejaculations to prepare her for gaining the Indulgence of the Jubilee. At twelve he brought her Holy Viaticum, which she received in a spoonful of water. At that instant a beautiful expression of heavenly fervour reappeared in Mother Barat's countenance. All the community were present at this solemn

moment. For some time afterwards it seemed doubtful whether she was conscious or not; her eyes were closed, and she did not move for many hours; but on Tuesday morning, at about one o'clock, whilst the Litanies of the Blessed Virgin were being said, it was observed that she seemed to pray, and even tried to strike her breast each time that the words *Agnus Dei* were pronounced. They gave her holy water, which she took, and succeeded in making the sign of the Cross with the assistance of those near her. Father Gamard, rejoicing at these symptoms of consciousness, said to her: "Reverend Mother, if you are aware that yesterday I gave you absolution of all the sins of your life, let me know it by pressing Mother Gœtz's hand." An energetic pressure answered this question. Similar interrogations were addressed to her with regard to the reception of Holy Viaticum, Extreme Unction, and the Indulgence of the Jubilee. Each time the mute reply was quickly and earnestly made, and it was evident that though Madame Barat had ceased to utter in this world, her soul had its full freedom, and in consequence the entire merit of the sacrifice she was offering up to God. When Mother Prevost and Mother Lehon, who had been telegraphed for —one from Lyons and the other from Marseilles—arrived, Doctor Gouraud said to the Venerable Superior: "Give your blessing if you can to your good Mother Prevost, who is so grieved to find you in this state: raise your finger to show that you do so." The request was immediately complied with, and then Madame Gœtz hastened to ask for a blessing on all the Society. The hand of the Mother General was raised with an eagerness which moved to tears all her children. Dr. Bauchet, her habitual physician, then said: "And will you not also bless your doctors?" But she made no sign. Humble to the end, Mother Barat did not feel that it belonged to her to bless any one but her own daughters.

On the night from the 23rd to Wednesday the 24th the dying Foundress kept striking her breast whenever in the Litanies of the Sacred Heart and the Blessed Virgin, or in the Prayers for the Dying, the words of the *Agnus Dei* occurred. Her little crucifix never left her hand, and was frequently raised to her lips; she moved it in her hands so as to place the face of our Lord just before her. Mother Gœtz had telegraphed to ask for the Holy Father's blessing. The answer which Mgr. de Mérode transmitted arrived in the night, and Madame Barat received this additional grace in the morning of the 24th. That day Dr. Bauchet lifted up her right eyelid and begged her in token of consciousness to press the hand of her Vicar General. Glancing at Mother Gœtz, the dying servant of God seemed to express in that last pressure of her hand all the feelings of her soul. "Never can I describe," her successor said, "what I felt in receiving that farewell."

Thursday, the 25th, was Ascension Day. Mother Barat's weakness was increasing and her pulse failing. Madame Gœtz relates as follows what took place during those last hours: "Mothers Lehon, Cahier, and I had passed the greatest part of the preceding nights by our dear Mother's side. In the evening, as she seemed a little better, we withdrew for a few moments, not expecting the end to be so near. But at half-past nine, having been informed that death was at hand, we all went back and surrounded the bed where our Mother seemed to be yielding herself up more and more completely into the hands of the Divine Master. She was sinking by degrees. We were all watching the least movements of that face, so full of heavenly peace, in order not to miss its last expression. Father Gamard gave her absolution over and over again and recited the prayers of the Church. Her breathing became less and less audible, and at last scarcely perceptible. At eleven o'clock exactly, without the least effort, our dear Mother

gave up her soul to God." It was the last hour of the feast of the Ascension. She had said on the Sunday before, "Thursday we go to Heaven."

Thus died Mother Barat.

Her body was exposed in her room on a funeral couch, visited and venerated not only by the nuns and children of her houses in Paris, but by numbers of pious persons of all ranks. During three days an ever-increasing crowd came to touch those holy remains with medals, rosaries, and pictures. The deceased Foundress was dressed in her religious habit, a crown of white roses encircled her head, in her hands were placed her crucifix, her rosary, and a bunch of lilies. Her countenance was serene and sweet as in life, and her lips seemed to smile.

On the 29th of May the funeral service was performed at the chapel of the mother-house. It was in a vault at Conflans, under the Chapel of Our Lady of Sorrows, that the Mother General was buried. Her communities, her orphans, the pupils of her schools, and a number of friends and strangers, and of the poor she had so long assisted, followed her to the grave. On a plain marble slab, surmounted by the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and of Mary, framed with lilies, is inscribed this epitaph:

"Here rests, in the peace of Christ, Madeleine Louise Sophie Barat, Foundress of the Society of the Virgins of the Sacred Heart, which she governed for sixty-two years with admirable suavity and prudence. In proportion to its extension and its prosperity did her self-abasement increase. She attributed all its success to God. She died on the feast of the Ascension of our Lord, the 25th of May, 1865, aged eighty-five years, five months, and thirteen days. Hail and farewell, good Mother. Live in God, and do not forget your children in the Sacred Heart."

As soon as the news of Mother Barat's death was known, expressions of regret and admiration came pouring in at

the mother-house. Under every form and variety of praise the same thought prevails in all these letters; a conviction of the sanctity and a belief in the felicity of the servant of God. When Father de Ponlevoy heard of her illness he wrote: "She has indeed well deserved of God and of the Church and her religious family. It is our Lord's will to make her ascend from the Cross to Heaven; be sure that what she has begun in time she will continue in eternity." Another Father wrote: "And so your holy Mother Barat is in Heaven! God has called her there in the very year in which the Blessed Margaret Mary has been placed on the altars of the Church. She sowed the holy seed and your Mother gathered in the harvest. They are now rejoicing together at having been chosen by God to kindle the love of His Divine Son." Many a prevision was formed as to her becoming herself one day the object of public veneration. Father Billet, Rector of Feldkirch, wrote only one line to Mother Mayer, Superior of Riedenburg, in answer to her announcement of the Mother General's death: "This news augurs a new feast some time hence."

Supernatural revelations of the beatitude of this chosen soul were not wanting. A religious saw her in a dream surrounded by a dazzling light and holding in her hand a rosary containing as many diamond beads as she had founded houses. Another beheld her entering Heaven accompanied by the spouses she had given to our Lord. At Sarria, in Spain, she was said to have appeared to the priest who was offering up the Holy Sacrifice on the day of the renovation of vows by the aspirants, and to have charged him to tell her daughters that she was present amongst them and would joyfully offer their vows to our Lord.

Soon from different places in America, as well as Europe, letters arrived with accounts of cures effected by the relics and the prayers of the servant of God. At the convent of the Sacred Heart at Blumenthal, Madame

Baldwine de Schultz had long been suffering from an inflamed swelling of the knee, which caused her great pain. She began a novena and applied every day to the suffering limb a piece of clothing which had belonged to Mother Barat. On the fifth day, as she was doing this and praying, she felt that the ailment was disappearing. The cure was sudden and complete. The doctor who attended her considered it as supernatural.

A Lay-sister, Louise Françoise Delaroux, had been for several years crippled by acute rheumatism. It fixed itself at last in the right shoulder and arm which she could not move without severe pain. Three fingers of her right hand were entirely contracted. She had been removed from place to place, and every kind of remedy tried. The physician at Angoulême, where she was staying at that time, had declared her case hopeless. The day after he had pronounced this opinion, the Superior of the convent proposed that all remedies should be abandoned and a novena to the Sacred Heart of our Lord begun to ask for her cure through Mother Barat's intercession. This was accordingly done, and the disabled limb wrapped up in a piece of flannel which had been used by the servant of God. During the first night the pains increased excessively, but the following morning during Mass a cracking sensation was felt in the wrist and the contracted fingers were loosened. Each day of the novena a notable improvement took place, by the time it was ended the malady had quite disappeared, and the Sister has been perfectly well ever since. In this case, as in the last, the doctors admitted that they could not account for the cure by any natural cause.

In March of the same year another Lay-sister, Bernardine Duteil, then at Toulouse, was delivered by similar means from an interior illness, which the most careful and vigorous medical treatment had been unable to subdue. She wore

during a novena a piece of linen with which Mother Barat's face had been wiped a short time before her death. The pains increased in intensity, but so did her faith. On the morning of the ninth day she said: "Dear Mother, I am your child; do not forsake me in this last prayer." The suffering ceased at once, she was completely cured.

On the 29th of September, 1867, we find Madame Octavie de Lauréal writing as follows from St. Louis, in the United States, to a nun she had known at the Sacred Heart in Paris: "About the 20th of August, my grandchild, Nancy Bakewell, who is in her twelfth year, was seized with severe pain in the right leg. On the 25th, it became so violent that she was obliged to remain in bed. Two eminent doctors were successively consulted: both declared that this was the beginning of hip disease, the only remedy for which was to keep the limb completely motionless. The evil rapidly increased, the hip swelled and the infirm leg soon became shorter than the other. The child never moved from her bed. On the 17th of September, her Mother, full of anxiety and grief, went to the convent of the Sacred Heart, where Nancy had made her first Communion the year before, and asked the nuns to pray for her. They promised to make a novena, and gave my daughter a piece of flannel Mother Barat had worn. It was applied that evening to the child's leg. She slept soundly, and on awaking the next morning her first words were: 'Mother I am cured.' She got out of bed and walked about the room. Her mother, almost wild with joy, hastened to her husband's room to tell him the wonderful news. Mr. Bakewell is a lawyer, a sensible, prudent man, little inclined to believe in supernatural events, and when his wife, scarcely able to speak in the midst of her tears, related to him their child's miraculous recovery, he was quite incredulous and begged her not to be deceived by her imagination. An accidental suspension

of sufferings, he said, had probably led to a delusion which if indulged in would only cause them all additional sorrow. In this state of mind he went to his daughter's bedside, and spoke to her in the same sense. She submissively listened to his lecture, and then said with simplicity: 'But, father, I am cured.' Wanting to prove to her the folly of this belief, he said: 'In that case, my child, get up and walk.' She instantly obeyed, crossed the room, and even stood for an instant only on the leg which had been diseased. Astonished and agitated, but scarcely yet convinced, Mr. Bakewell told her to get into bed again, and went to speak to the priest and to ask the doctor to call on his family. When in the evening he came home from his office he fully expected to find his daughter worse than usual. Great was his astonishment when he heard from the servant that Nancy, with her mother and brothers and sisters, were gone on foot to make their thanksgiving at the convent of the Sacred Heart about three quarters of a mile from their house."

A convert lady, Mrs. MacNerney, heard of the miraculous event and felt inspired to seek by the same means the cure of her infant son, whose foot soon after his birth had become so shrunk and mis-shaped through disease that the doctors recommended amputation as the only means of saving his life. She also had recourse to the prayers of the Nuns of the Sacred Heart and obtained a relic of their Foundress. During the novena they made, the poor little foot grew worse and worse, the wounds increasing in size so that the bones were visible. Still the mother prayed and hoped on. Her faith was rewarded. Towards the end of the novena a decided improvement took place, and by the time it ended on Christmas Eve the sores were healed and the foot returned to a natural shape and size. A fortnight afterwards the child could walk upon it, and ever since he has been quite well.

Margaret Murray, a little girl nine years of age, whose face and neck were devoured by a malignant cancer, used to be constantly asking her parents if they could do nothing for her. She was likewise cured at St. Louis by the application of a piece of Mother Barat's dress. A portion of the child's jaw had been destroyed by the disease and her sight was nearly gone. At the close of the novena she was quite well and her jaw completely restored.

Francis McConnel, a Protestant, also residing at St. Louis, seemed so near his end that the doctor, who had said the evening before that he would not pass the night, actually came in the morning with the certificate of his patient's death in his pocket ready to be signed. To his unspeakable surprise he found him perfectly well, a friend had applied a relic of Mother Barat to his chest, and he recovered, to use his wife's own words, like a pistol shot. This wonderful grace led to his conversion.

Emily Tillman, a little girl, who after the scarlet fever had become so deaf that it was only by shouting in her ear that she could be made to hear, asked her parents to procure for her something that had belonged to Mother Barat, and made a novena in her honour. On the seventh day at dinner she heard her mother say to one of her sisters: "Ask Emily what she will have." She replied herself to the question before it had been put to her in the usual manner, and from that moment her hearing was completely restored. The next time she went to confession to the Rev. Father Burke he could hardly believe that his little penitent was the same child he had known so deaf.

Another inhabitant of St. Louis, Dr. Fondenberger, gave the following particulars as to the recovery of his daughter, which he had good reason to attribute to Mother Barat's intercession. On the day when his little Mary Elizabeth had been baptized, so strong a sense came over him of the dangers and miseries of this world that he carried

his child to the altar of Mary Immaculate and consecrated her to that Blessed Mother. With tears in his eyes he prayed that she might die rather than live to offend God. In 1868 this beloved child had a dangerous illness for which every sort of remedy was tried and entirely failed. Her end seemed approaching. He remembered the prayer he had made on the day of her baptism, and felt as if his child's death was going to be the answer to it. His heart was ready to break, but he made an act of submission to God's will. Worn out with fatigue that night he went to bed at his wife's earnest request and fell asleep. A little before midnight he woke and saw the door of his room opened and Mother Barat and two other nuns coming towards him. She gently touched his hand and said: "Your child will not die." Then she and her companions disappeared. Very soon after this apparition his little daughter was declared out of danger. When he related what he had seen to his wife, she told him that three nights before she had received in a dream the same intimation from Mother Barat. A relic of the servant of God was placed on the child's neck and a novena commenced. Before it was ended the cure was complete.

When we think that most of these miracles took place in America, and remember how earnest had been the desire of the venerable Foundress to work in person in that country, where her daughters were permitted to accomplish so much for the interests of Jesus and the glory of God, it almost seems as if after death our Lord had allowed her to visit it in spirit, and to obtain special graces for a place which had been so constantly in her thoughts and so dear to her heart.

Many other graces of the same sort, many wonderful answers to prayer have been received through her intercession in the Old World and the New during more recent years. The list will be a numerous one when the day

comes which her daughters are striving to hasten by their prayers—the longed-for day when they hope to see their Foundress placed on the altars of the Church, amongst those who will shine as stars for ever, because they have turned many unto righteousness.

And now we have finished the task assigned to us, that of condensing in a comparatively short compass a history which might profitably have been enlarged instead of abridged. We have endeavoured not to omit in this volume any of the details which bring before us the personal character of Mother Barat, or the incidents which show the peculiar nature of her work during that long course of years which, like a stream gradually widening as it approaches the sea, went on to the end fertilizing and blessing the wide world scenes of her and her children's labours. The more attentively her life is studied the more we discern in it the distinguishing feature, so to speak, the sanctity of this great servant of God—the simplicity which stands in strange and remarkable contrast with so much which would, naturally speaking, have tended to destroy it.

From first to last there must have been great temptations, or if Divine grace forestalled actual temptations, much liability to self-complacency in the circumstances of her singular destiny. When the little Sophie in the poor garret where she was kept sometimes against her will, while the grapes were being gathered and the villagers merry-making, read Virgil, translated Homer, studied botany and astronomy, and as a recreation learned modern languages; when, in Paris, she so far excelled her older companions in ability and knowledge, that her austere brother checked her progress, as well as burnt her new gown, lest his little sister should be vain; when at the age of twenty-three she succeeded in the post of Superior of the community which, under her guidance, was to grow into the Society of the Sacred Heart, one who shortly before had declared

that the poor girl did not know how to utter two words; when, later on, in the schools she founded the children of the highest nobility of France were intrusted to her care and she had to buy for their use one of the most splendid mansions in Paris, the time-honoured Hotel Biron; when at Rome, the Foundress of the new educational institute was visited not only by cardinals and princes, but in her sick chamber by the Holy Father himself, and as life advanced was consulted, admired, venerated by the great ones of the world, reputed and treated as a saint; was it not enough, naturally speaking, to destroy, if not humility, at any rate the perfect simplicity which is the delicate bloom of that heavenly virtue? And yet who was ever more simply humble than Mother Barat? The remark of the priest who said, when he heard of the wonderful success of her Society, that she must have been very humble, had a deep meaning in it. Its special vocation, the hardest, perhaps, of all within the range of Christian charity, has more snares in it than work in the dwellings of the poor, or the atmosphere of the ragged school. Poverty of spirit is more difficult to preserve in houses where children of the higher classes must be comfortably lodged and surrounded with refinement than in the rough abodes of other nuns, even though the cells of the religious may be as poor as those in a strictly cloistered monastery or a house of mercy. Its only safeguard is that true love of simplicity which the Foundress of the Society of the Sacred Heart possessed and bequeathed to her daughters.

Even in Mother Barat's days in Paris people sometimes sneered at the number of high-born ladies who, in fine carriages and smart dresses, flocked to the Hotel Biron and called the religious of the Sacred Heart the fashionable nuns. Yet it was from that fashionable house that Mother Duchesne and her young and gifted companions went forth as missionaries to the emigrants and Indians of

America, enduring the hardships of extreme poverty with joyful fortitude. But we doubt whether even these heroic women merited more in God's sight than those of their Sisters who, for His sake, bore the burthen of apostleship amongst the titled and rich, silently doing a work, the extent of which only the Day of Judgment will make known. Then it will be seen how many of those women of the world who visited the parlours of the Sacred Heart learnt to live like Esther, undefiled and holy in the midst of a corrupt society; how many were drawn back from the edge of an abyss, and sometimes led to heights of virtue undreamed of by frivolous cavillers; how much wealth passed into the hands of the suffering poor; how many schemes were formed and ripened for the salvation of souls in that intercourse often endured as a penance by souls in love with solitude and prayer. Not only the houses but the hearts of the Nuns of the Sacred Heart must be open to those for whom the memories of childhood and the affection for a religious are often the only threads which check their downward course. Their hands must be stretched out to attract or to recall to the narrow road, missed or forsaken, every weak and erring soul within their reach. We have seen the number and variety of Mother Barat's good works, her tender devotion to the poor, her ardent zeal for missionary work, her passion for solitude with God; but first and foremost stands on record for the admiration and imitation of Christian women, the apostolate which she originated amongst the higher classes by the foundation of congregations of the Children of Mary living in the world, or, in other words, whenever they answered *her* idea of their action, apostles in their homes and in society. And is it not this that we need at this time, and in this country, if the harvest is to be gathered in which seems to be awaiting the reaper's hand? It is less difficult to induce people to abandon the world than to persuade

those who have to tread its thorny paths to aid their companions on the road. We have holy nuns by hundreds, and numbers of pious women leading retired and useful lives, but how few who, whilst they must and do join in society because it is a duty of their state of life, go into it with as lofty an aim and as ardent a desire of helping others as the missionary or the prison visitor, who prepare for a ball or a party with as earnest a prayer that they may do there as those on their way to an hospital or a gaol. Few—very few indeed; and yet what an apostolate is open to such women. The words of the poet might be addressed to them:

> In the world's wide field of battle,
> In the bivouac of life,
> Be not like dumb driven cattle;
> Be as heroes in the fight.

They might be ministering angels amidst scenes where many a soul is to be met with, perhaps only requiring encouraging words, a hand held out to them, a grave, gentle remonstrance, to draw them from despair to hope, from a godless to a pious life, from heresy into the true Church. If condemned to dissipation, they can turn the base metal into gold, and change what is too often the Devil's service into work for God. Such was the spirit Mother Barat strove to inspire to the pupils of her schools. This was the subject of her exhortations to the Children of Mary attached to her Society. "Be apostles, my children," she said, as much to the young brides of the Faubourg St. Germaine as to the nuns she sent to the shores of the Mississippi.

We want saints in society even more than amongst the most degraded of the poor. That was what Mother Barat so deeply felt. May her prayers obtain them for us!

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